THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

VOL. VIII.


BRITISH MUSEUM

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR TO The REVOLUTION in 1688.

In EIGHT VOLUMES, illuſtrated with Plates.

By DAVID HUME, Eſq.

A NEW EDITION, with the AUTHOR's laſt CORRECTIONS and IMPROVEMENTS.

To which is prefixed,

A Short ACCOUNT of his LIFE, written by Himſelf.

VOL. VIII.

LONDON:
Printed for T. CADELL, in the Strand:
And ſold by T. LONGMAN, N° 39, Paternoſter-row.
MDCCLXXXIX.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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1674. Schemes of the Cabal.

IF we conſider the projects of the famous Cabal, it will appear hard to determine, whether the end which thoſe miniſters purſued were more blamable and pernicious, or the means, by which they were to effect it, more impolitic and imprudent. Though they might talk only of recovering or fixing the

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king's authority; their intention could be no other than that of making him abſolute: Since it was not poſſible to regain or maintain, in oppoſition to the people, any of thoſe powers of the crown aboliſhed by late law or cuſtom, without ſubduing the people, and rendering the royal prerogative entirely uncontrollable. Againſt ſuch a ſcheme, they might foreſee, that every part of the nation would declare themſelves, not only the old parliamentary faction, which, though they kept not in a body, were ſtill numerous; but even the greateſt royaliſts, who were indeed attached to monarchy, but deſired to ſee it limited and reſtrained by law. It had appeared, that the preſent parliament, though elected during the greateſt prevalence of the royal party, was yet tenacious of popular privileges, and retained a conſiderable jealouſy of the crown, even before they had received any juſt ground of ſuſpicion. The guards, therefore, together with a ſmall army, new levied, and undiſciplined, and compoſed too of Engliſhmen, were almoſt the only domeſtic reſources which the king could depend on in the proſecution of theſe dangerous counſels.

THE aſſiſtance of the French king was, no doubt, deemed, by the Cabal, a conſiderable ſupport in the ſchemes which they were forming; but it is not eaſily conceived, that they could imagine themſelves capable of directing and employing an aſſociate of ſo domineering a character. They ought juſtly to have ſuſpected that it would be the ſole intention of Lewis, as it evidently was his intereſt, to raiſe incurable jealouſies between the king and his people; and that he ſaw how much a ſteddy uniform government in this iſland, whether free or abſolute, would form invincible barriers to his ambition. Should his aſſiſtance be demanded; if he ſent a ſmall ſupply, it would ſerve only to enrage the people, and render the breach altogether irreparable; if he furniſhed

furniſhed a great force, ſufficient to ſubdue the nation, there was little reaſon to truſt his generoſity, with regard to the uſe which he would make of this advantage. CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

In all its other parts the plan of the Cabal, it muſt be confeſſed, appears equally abſurd and incongruous. If the war with Holland were attended with great ſucceſs, and involved the ſubjection of the republic; ſuch an acceſſion of force muſt fall to Lewis, not to Charles: And what hopes afterwards of reſiſting by the greateſt unanimity ſo mighty a monarch? How dangerous, or rather how ruinous, to depend upon his aſſiſtance againſt domeſtic diſcontents? If the Dutch, by their own vigour, and the aſſiſtance of allies, were able to defend themſelves, and could bring the war to an equality, the French arms would be ſo employed abroad, that no conſiderable reinforcement could thence be expected to ſecond the king's enterpriſes in England. And might not the project of overawing or ſubduing the people be eſteemed, of itſelf, ſufficiently odious, without the aggravation of ſacrificing that State, which they regarded as their beſt ally, and with which, on many accounts, they were deſirous of maintaining the greateſt concord and ſtricteſt confederacy?

Whatever views likewiſe might be entertained of promoting by theſe meaſures the catholic religion; they could only tend to render all the other ſchemes abortive, and make them fall with inevitable ruin upon the projectors. The catholic religion, indeed, where it is eſtabliſhed, is better fitted than the proteſtant for ſupporting an abſolute monarchy; but would any man have thought of it as the means of acquiring arbitrary authority in England, where it was more deteſted than even ſlavery itſelf?

It muſt be allowed, that the difficulties, and even inconſiſtencies, attending the ſchemes of the Cabal,

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are ſo numerous and obvious, that one feels at firſt an inclination to deny the reality of thoſe ſchemes, and to ſuppoſe them entirely the chimeras of calumny and faction. But the utter impoſſibility of accounting, by any other hypotheſis, for thoſe ſtrange meaſures embraced by the court, as well as for the numerous circumſtances which accompanied them, obliges us to acknowledge (though there remains no direct evidence of it [a]) that a formal plan was

[a] Since the publication of this Hiſtory, the Author has had occaſion to ſee the moſt direct and poſitive evidence of this conſpiracy. From the humanity and candour of the Principal of the Scotch College at Paris, he was admitted to peruſe James the Second's Memoirs, kept there. They amount to ſeveral volumes of ſmall folio, all writ with that prince's own hand, and comprehending the remarkable incidents of his life, from his early youth till near the time of his death. His account of the French alliance is as follows: The intention of the king and duke was chiefly to change the religion of England, which they deemed an eaſy undertaking, becauſe of the great propenſity, as they imagined, of the cavaliers and church party to popery: The treaty with Lewis was concluded at Verſailles in the end of 1669, or beginning of 1670, by lord Arundel of Wardour, whom no hiſtorian mentions as having had any hand in theſe tranſactions. The purport of it was, that Lewis was to give Charles 200,000 pounds a year in quarterly payments, in order to enable him to ſettle the catholic religion in England; and he was alſo to ſupply him with an army of 6000 men in caſe of any inſurrection. When that work was finiſhed, England was to join with France in making war upon Holland. In caſe of ſucceſs, Lewis was to have the inland provinces, the prince of Orange Holland in ſovereignty, and Charles, Sluice, the Brille, Walkeren, with the reſt of the ſea-ports as far as Mazeland Sluice. The king's project was firſt to effect the change of religion in England; but the ducheſs of Orleans, in the interview at Dover, perſuaded him to begin with the Dutch war, contrary to the remonſtrances of the duke of York, who inſiſted that Lewis, after ſerving his own purpoſes, would no longer trouble himſelf about England. The duke makes no mention of any deſign to render the king abſolute; but that was, no doubt, implied in the other project, which was to be effected entirely by royal authority. The king was ſo zealous a papiſt, that he wept for joy when he ſaw the proſpect of re-uniting his kingdom to the catholic church.

Sir John Dalrymple has ſince publiſhed ſome other curious particulars with regard to this treaty. We find, that it was concerted and ſigned with the privity alone of four popiſh counſellors of the king's, Arlington, Arundel, Clifford, and ſir Richard Bealing. The ſecret was kept from Buckingham, Aſhley, and Lauderdale. In order to engage them to take part in it, a very refined and a very mean artifice was fallen upon by the king. After the ſecret concluſion and ſignature of the treaty, the king pretended to theſe three miniſters, that he wiſhed to have a treaty and alliance with France for mutual ſupport, and for a Dutch

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was laid for changing the religion, and ſubverting the conſtitution, of England, and that the king and the miniſtry were in reality conſpirators againſt the people. What is moſt probable in human affairs, is not always true; and a very minute circumſtance, overlooked in our ſpeculations, ſerves often to explain events, which may ſeem the moſt ſurpriſing and unaccountable. Though the king poſſeſſed penetration and a ſound judgment, his capacity was chiefly fitted for ſmaller matters [b], and the ordinary occurrences of life; nor had he application enough to carry his view to diſtant conſequences, or to digeſt and adjuſt any plan of political operations. As he ſcarcely ever thought twice on any one ſubject, every appearance of advantage was apt to ſeduce him; and when he found his way obſtructed by unlooked-for difficulties, he readily turned aſide into the firſt path, where he expected more to gratify the natural indolence of his diſpoſition. To this verſatility or pliancy of genius, he himſelf was inclined to truſt; and he thought, that after trying an experiment of enlarging his authority, and altering the national religion, he could eaſily, if it failed, return into the ordinary channel of government. But the

a Dutch war; and when various pretended obſtacles and difficulties were ſurmounted, a ſham treaty was concluded with their conſent and approbation, containing every article of the former real treaty, except that of the king's change of religion. However, there was virtually involved even in this treaty, the aſſuming of abſolute government in England: For the ſupport of French troops, and a war with Holland, ſo contrary to the intereſts and inclinations of his people, could mean nothing elſe. One cannot ſufficiently admire the abſolute want of common ſenſe, which appears throughout the whole of this criminal tranſaction. For if popery was ſo much the object of national horror, that even the king's three miniſters, Buckingham, Aſhley, and Lauderdale, and ſuch profligate ones too, either would not, or durſt not receive it, what hopes could he entertain of forcing the nation into that communion? Conſidering the ſtate of the kingdom, full of veteran and zealous ſoldiers, bred during the civil wars, it is probable that he had not kept the crown two months after a declaration ſo wild and extravagant. This was probably the reaſon why the king of France and the French miniſters always diſſuaded him from taking off the maſk, till the ſucceſſes of the Dutch war ſhould render that meaſure prudent and practicable.

[b] Duke of Buckingham's character of K. Charles II.

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ſuſpicions of the people, though they burſt not forth at once, were by this attempt rendered altogether incurable; and the more they reflected on the circumſtances attending it, the more reſentment and jealouſy were they apt to entertain. They obſerved, that the king never had any favourite; that he was never governed by his miniſters, ſcarcely even by his miſtreſſes; and that he himſelf was the chief ſpring of all public counſels. Whatever appearance, therefore, of a change might be aſſumed, they ſtill ſuſpected, that the ſame project was ſecretly in agitation; and they deemed no precaution too great to ſecure them againſt the pernicious conſequences of ſuch meaſures.

THE king, ſenſible of this jealouſy, was inclined thenceforth not to truſt his people, of whom he had even before entertained a great diffidence; and, though obliged to make a ſeparate peace, he ſtill kept up connexions with the French monarch. He apologiſed for deſerting his ally, by repreſenting to him all the real undiſſembled difficulties under which he laboured; and Lewis, with the greateſt complaiſance and good humour, admitted the validity of his excuſes. The duke likewiſe, conſcious that his principles and conduct had rendered him ſtill more obnoxious to the people, maintained on his own account a ſeparate correſpondence with the French court, and entered into particular connexions with Lewis, which theſe princes dignified with the name of friendſhip. The duke had only in view to ſecure his ſucceſſion, and favour the catholics; and it muſt be acknowledged to his praiſe, that, though his ſchemes were, in ſome particulars, dangerous to the people, they gave the king no juſt ground of jealouſy. A dutiful ſubject, and an affectionate brother, he knew no other rule of conduct than obedience; and the ſame unlimited ſubmiſſion which afterwards, when king, he exacted of his people, he was ever willing, before he aſcended the throne, to pay to his ſovereign.

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As the king was at peace with all the world, and almoſt the only prince in Europe placed in that agreeable ſituation, he thought proper to offer his mediation to the contending powers, in order to compoſe their differences. France, willing to negotiate under ſo favourable a mediator, readily accepted of Charles's offer; but it was apprehended, that, for a like reaſon, the allies would be inclined to refuſe it. In order to give a ſanction to his new meaſures, the king invited Temple from his retreat, and appointed him ambaſſador to the States. That wiſe miniſter, reflecting on the unhappy iſſue of his former undertakings, and the fatal turn of counſels which had occaſioned it, reſolved, before he embarked anew, to acquaint himſelf, as far as poſſible, with the real intentions of the king, in thoſe popular meaſures which he ſeemed again to have adopted. After blaming the dangerous ſchemes of the Cabal, which Charles was deſirous to excuſe, he told his majeſty very plainly, that he would find it extremely difficult, if not abſolutely impoſſible, to introduce into England the ſame ſyſtem of government and religion which was eſtabliſhed in France: That the univerſal bent of the nation was againſt both; and it required ages to change the genius and ſentiments of a people: That many, who were at bottom indifferent in matters of religion, would yet oppoſe all alterations on that head; becauſe they conſidered, that nothing but force of arms could ſubdue the reluctance of the people againſt popery; after which, they knew, there could be no ſecurity for civil liberty: That in France every circumſtance had long been adjuſted to that ſyſtem of government, and tended to its eſtabliſhment and ſupport: That the commonalty, being poor and diſpirited, were of no account; the nobility, engaged by the proſpect or poſſeſſion of numerous offices, civil and military, were entirely attached to the court; the eccleſiaſtics, retained by like motives, added the ſanction of reli-

Remonſtrances of ſir W. Temple.

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gion to the principles of civil policy: That in England a great part of the landed property belonged either to the yeomanry or middling gentry; the king had few offices to beſtow; and could not himſelf even ſubſiſt, much leſs maintain an army, except by the voluntary ſupplies of his parliament: That if he had an army on foot, yet, if compoſed of Engliſhmen, they would never be prevailed on to promote ends which the people ſo much feared and hated: That the Roman catholics in England were not the hundredth part of the nation, and in Scotland not the two hundredth; and it ſeemed againſt all common ſenſe to hope, by one part, to govern ninety-nine, who were of contrary ſentiments and diſpoſitions: And that foreign troops, if few, would tend only to inflame hatred and diſcontent; and how to raiſe and bring over at once, or to maintain many, it was very difficult to imagine. To theſe reaſonings Temple added the authority of Gourville, a Frenchman, for whom he knew the king had entertained a great eſteem. "A king of "England," ſaid Gourville, "who will be *the* "*man of his people*, is the greateſt king in the "world: But if he will be any thing more, he is "nothing at all." The king heard, at firſt, this diſcourſe with ſome impatience; but being a dextrous diſſembler, he ſeemed moved at laſt, and laying his hand on Temple's, ſaid, with an appearing cordiality, "And I will be the man of my "people."

TEMPLE, when he went abroad, ſoon found, that the ſcheme of mediating a peace was likely to prove abortive. The allies, beſides their jealouſy of the king's mediation, expreſſed a great ardour for the continuance of war. Holland had ſtipulated with Spain never to come to an accommodation, till all things in Flanders were reſtored to the condition in which they had been left by the Pyrenean treaty. The emperor had high pretenſions in Alſace; and

as

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as the greater part of the empire joined in the alliance, it was hoped that France, ſo much overmatched in force, would ſoon be obliged to ſubmit to the terms demanded of her. The Dutch, indeed, oppreſſed by heavy taxes, as well as checked in their commerce, were deſirous of peace; and had few or no claims of their own to retard it: But they could not in gratitude, or even in good policy, abandon allies, to whoſe protection they had ſo lately been indebted for their ſafety. The prince of Orange likewiſe, who had great influence in their councils, was all on fire for military fame, and was well pleaſed to be at the head of armies, from which ſuch mighty ſucceſſes were expected. Under various pretences, he eluded, during the whole campaign, the meeting with Temple; and after the troops were ſent into winter-quarters, he told that miniſter, in his firſt audience, that till greater impreſſion were made on France, reaſonable terms could not be hoped for; and it were therefore vain to negotiate.

Campaign in 1674.

The ſucceſs of the campaign had not anſwered expectation. The prince of Orange, with a ſuperior army, was oppoſed in Flanders to the prince of Condé, and had hoped to penetrate into France by that quarter, where the frontier was then very feeble. After long endeavouring, though in vain, to bring Condé to a battle, he raſhly expoſed, at Seneffe, a wing of his army; and that active prince failed not at once to ſee and to ſeize the advantage. But this imprudence of the prince of Orange was amply compenſated by his behaviour in that obſtinate and bloody action which enſued. He rallied his diſmayed troops; he led them to the charge; he puſhed the veteran and martial troops of France; and he obliged the prince of Condé, notwithſtanding his age and character, to exert greater efforts, and to riſque his perſon more than in any action, where, even during the heat of youth, he had ever com-

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commanded. After ſun-ſet, the action was continued by the light of the moon; and it was darkneſs at laſt, not the wearineſs of the combatants, which put an end to the conteſt, and left the victory undecided. "The prince of Orange," ſaid Condé, with candour and generoſity, "has acted, in every "thing, like an old captain, except venturing his "life too like a young ſoldier." Oudenarde was afterwards inveſted by the prince of Orange; but he was obliged, by the Imperial and Spaniſh generals, to raiſe the ſiege on the approach of the enemy. He afterwards beſieged and took Grave; and at the beginning of winter, the allied armies broke up, with great diſcontents and complaints on all ſides.

The allies were not more ſucceſsful in other places. Lewis, in a few weeks, reconquered Franchecomté. In Alſace, Turenne diſplayed, againſt a much ſuperior enemy, all that military ſkill, which had long rendered him the moſt renowned captain of his age and nation. By a ſudden and forced march, he attacked and beat at Sintzheim the duke of Lorrain and Caprara, general of the Imperialiſts. Seventy thouſand Germans poured into Alſace, and took up their quarters in that province. Turenne, who had retired into Lorrain, returned unexpectedly upon them. He attacked and defeated a body of the enemy at Mulhauſen. He chaſed from Colmar the elector of Brandenburgh, who commanded the German troops. He gained a new advantage at Turkheim. And having diſlodged all the allies, he obliged them to repaſs the Rhine, full of ſhame for their multiplied defeats, and ſtill more, of anger and complaints againſt each other.

In England, all theſe events were conſidered by the people with great anxiety and concern; though the king and his miniſters affected great indifference with regard to them. Conſiderable alterations were about this time made in the Engliſh miniſtry.

Bucking-

Buckingham was diſmiſſed, who had long, by his wit and entertaining humour, poſſeſſed the king's favour. Arlington, now chamberlain, and Danby the treaſurer, poſſeſſed chiefly the king's confidence. Great hatred and jealouſy took place between theſe miniſters; and public affairs were ſomewhat diſturbed by their quarrels. But Danby daily gained ground with his maſter: And Arlington declined in the ſame proportion. Danby was a frugal miniſter; and, by his application and induſtry, he brought the revenue into tolerable order. He endeavoured ſo to conduct himſelf as to give offence to no party; and the conſequence was, that he was able entirely to pleaſe none. He was a declared enemy to the French alliance; but never poſſeſſed authority enough to overcome the prepoſſeſſions which the king and the duke retained towards it. It muſt be aſcribed to the prevalence of that intereſt, aided by money remitted from Paris, that the parliament was aſſembled ſo late this year; leſt they ſhould attempt to engage the king in meaſures againſt France, during the enſuing campaign. They met not till the approach of ſummer [a]. 1675. April 13.

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EVERY ſtep, taken by the commons, diſcovered that ill-humour and jealouſy, to which the late open meaſures of the king, and his preſent ſecret attachments, gave but too juſt foundation. They drew up a new bill againſt popery, and reſolved to inſert in it many ſevere clauſes for the detection and proſecution of prieſts: They preſented addreſſes a ſecond time againſt Lauderdale; and when the king's anſwer was not ſatisfactory, they ſeemed ſtill determined to perſevere in their applications: An accuſation was moved againſt Danby; but upon examining the ſeveral articles, it was not found to contain

A parliament.

[a] This year, on the 25th of March, died Henry Cromwel, ſecond ſon of the protector, in the 47th year of his age. He had lived unmoleſted in a private ſtation, ever ſince the king's reſtoration, which he rather favoured than oppoſed.

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any juſt reaſons of a proſecution; and was therefore dropped: They applied to the king for recalling his troops from the French ſervice; and as he only promiſed that they ſhould not be recruited, they appeared to be much diſſatisfied with the anſwer: A bill was brought in, making it treaſon to levy money without authority of parliament: Another vacating the ſeats of ſuch members as accepted of offices: Another to ſecure the perſonal liberty of the ſubject, and to prevent ſending any perſon priſoner beyond ſea.

THAT the court party might not be idle during theſe attacks, a bill for a new teſt was introduced into the houſe of peers by the earl of Lindeſey. All members of either houſe, and all who poſſeſſed any office, were by this bill required to ſwear, that it was not lawful, upon any pretence whatſoever, to take arms againſt the king; that they abhorred the traiterous poſition, of taking arms by his authority againſt his perſon, or againſt thoſe who were commiſſioned by him; and that they will not at any time endeavour the alteration of the proteſtant religion, or of the eſtabliſhed government either in church or ſtate.

Paſſive obedience.

GREAT oppoſition was made to this bill; as might be expected from the preſent diſpoſition of the nation. During ſeventeen days, the debates were carried on with much zeal; and all the reaſon and learning of both parties were diſplayed on the occaſion. The queſtion, indeed, with regard to reſiſtance, was a point which entered into the controverſies of the old parties, cavalier and roundhead; as it made an eſſential part of the preſent diſputes between court and country. Few neuters were found in the nation: But among ſuch as could maintain a calm indifference, there prevailed ſentiments wide of thoſe which were adopted by either party. Such perſons thought, that all general, ſpeculative declarations of the legiſlature, either for or againſt reſiſtance, were equally impolitic, and could ſerve to no other purpoſe,

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poſe, than to ſignalize in their turn the triumph of one faction over another: That the ſimplicity retained in the ancient laws of England, as well as in the laws of every other country, ought ſtill to be preſerved, and was beſt calculated to prevent the extremes on either ſide: That the abſolute excluſion of reſiſtance, in all poſſible caſes, was founded on *falſe* principles; its expreſs admiſſion might be attended with *dangerous* conſequences; and there was no neceſſity for expoſing the public to either inconvenience: That if a choice muſt neceſſarily be made in the caſe, the preference of utility to truth in public inſtitutions was apparent; nor could the ſuppoſition of reſiſtance beforehand, and in general terms, be ſafely admitted in any government: That even in mixt monarchies, where that ſuppoſition ſeemed moſt requiſite, it was yet entirely ſuperfluous; ſince no man, on the approach of extraordinary neceſſity, could be at a loſs, though not directed by legal declarations, to find the proper remedy: That even thoſe who might, at a diſtance, and by ſcholaſtic reaſoning, exclude all reſiſtance, would yet hearken to the voice of nature; when evident ruin, both to themſelves and to the public, muſt attend a ſtrict adherence to their pretended principles: That the queſtion, as it ought thus to be entirely excluded from all determinations of the legiſlature, was, even among private reaſoners, ſomewhat frivolous, and little better than a diſpute of words: That the one party could not pretend that reſiſtance ought ever to become a familiar practice; the other would ſurely have recourſe to it in great extremities: And thus the difference could only turn on the degrees of danger or oppreſſion, which would warrant this irregular remedy; a difference, which, in a general queſtion, it was impoſſible, by any language, preciſely to fix or determine.

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THERE were many other abſurdities in this teſt, particularly that of binding men by oath not to alter the government either in church or ſtate; ſince all human inſtitutions are liable to abuſe, and require continual amendments, which are, in reality, ſo many alterations. It is not indeed poſſible to make a law which does not innovate, more or leſs, in the government. Theſe difficulties produced ſuch obſtructions to the bill, that it was carried only by two voices in the houſe of peers. All the popiſh lords, headed by the earl of Briſtol, voted againſt it. It was ſent down to the houſe of commons, where it was likely to undergo a ſcrutiny ſtill more ſevere.

BUT a quarrel, which enſued between the two houſes, prevented the paſſing of every bill projected during the preſent ſeſſion. One Dr. Shirley, being caſt in a law-ſuit before chancery againſt ſir John Fag, a member of the houſe of commons, preferred a petition of appeal to the houſe of peers. The lords received it, and ſummoned Fag to appear before them. He complained to the lower houſe, who eſpouſed his cauſe. They not only maintained, that no member of their houſe could be ſummoned before the peers: They alſo aſſerted, that the upper-houſe could receive no appeals from any court of equity; a pretenſion which extremely retrenched the juriſdiction of the peers, and which was contrary to the practice that had prevailed during this whole century. The commons ſend Shirley to priſon; the lords aſſert their powers. Conferences are tried; but no accommodation enſues. Four lawyers are ſent to the Tower by the commons, for tranſgreſſing the orders of the houſe, and pleading in this cauſe before the peers. The peers denominate this arbitrary commitment a breach of the great charter, and order the lieutenant of the Tower to releaſe the priſoners: He declines obedience: They apply to the king, and deſire him to puniſh the

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lieutenant for his contempt. The king ſummons both houſes; exhorts them to unanimity; and informs them, that the preſent quarrel had ariſen from the contrivance of his and their enemies, who expected by that means to force a diſſolution of the parliament. His advice has no effect: The commons continue as violent as ever; and the king, finding that no buſineſs could be finiſhed, at laſt prorogued the parliament. 8th June.

When the parliament was again aſſembled, there appeared not in any reſpect a change in the diſpoſitions of either houſe. The king deſired ſupplies, as well for the building of ſhips, as for taking off anticipations, which lay upon his revenue. He even confeſſed, that he had not been altogether ſo frugal as he might have been, and as he reſolved to be for the future; though he aſſerted, that, to his great ſatisfaction, he had found his expences by no means ſo exorbitant as ſome had repreſented them. The commons took into conſideration the ſubject of ſupply. They voted 300,000 pounds for the building of ſhips; but they appropriated the ſum by very ſtrict clauſes. They paſſed a reſolution not to grant any ſupply for taking off the anticipations of the revenue [c]. This vote was carried in a full houſe, by a majority of four only: So nearly were the parties balanced. The quarrel was revived, to which Dr. Shirley's cauſe had given occaſion. The proceedings of the commons diſcovered the ſame violence as during the laſt ſeſſion. A motion was made in the houſe of peers, but rejected, for addreſſing the king to diſſolve the preſent parliament. The king contented himſelf with proroguing them to a very long term. Whether theſe quarrels between the 22d Nov.

13th Oct. A parliament.

[c] Several hiſtorians have affirmed, that the commons found, this ſeſſion, upon inquiry, that the king's revenue was 1,600,000 pounds a year, and that the neceſſary expence was but 700,000 pounds; and have appealed to the Journals for a proof. But there is not the leaſt appearance of this in the Journals; and the fact is impoſſible.

houſes

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houſes aroſe from contrivance or accident was not certainly known. Each party might, according to their different views, eſteem themſelves either gainers or loſers by them. The court might deſire to obſtruct all attacks from the commons, by giving them other employment. The country party might deſire the diſſolution of a parliament, which, notwithſtanding all diſguſts, ſtill contained too many royaliſts, ever to ſerve all the purpoſes of the malcontents.

Soon after the prorogation, there paſſed an incident, which in itſelf is trivial, but tends ſtrongly to mark the genius of the Engliſh government, and of Charles's adminiſtration, during this period. The liberty of the conſtitution, and the variety as well as violence of the parties, had begotten a propenſity for political converſation; and as the coffee-houſes in particular were the ſcenes, where the conduct of the king and the miniſtry was canvaſſed with great freedom, a proclamation was iſſued to ſuppreſs theſe places of rendezvous. Such an act of power, during former reigns, would have been grounded entirely on the prerogative; and before the acceſſion of the houſe of Stuart, no ſcruple would have been entertained with regard to that exerciſe of authority. But Charles, finding doubts to ariſe upon his proclamation, had recourſe to the judges, who ſupplied him with a chicane, and that too a frivolous one, by which he might juſtify his proceedings. The law, which ſettled the exciſe, enacted, that licenſes for retailing liquors might be refuſed to ſuch as could not find ſecurity for payment of the duties. But coffee was not a liquor ſubjected to exciſe; and even this power of refuſing licenſes was very limited, and could not reaſonably be extended beyond the intention of the act. The king therefore, obſerving the people to be much diſſatisfied, yielded to a petition of the coffee-men, who promiſed for the future to reſtrain all ſeditious diſcourſe in their houſes; and the proclamation was recalled.

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1675. Campaign of 1675.

THIS campaign proved more fortunate to the confederates than any other during the whole war. The French took the field in Flanders with a numerous army; and Lewis himſelf ſerved as a volunteer under the prince of Condé. But notwithſtanding his great preparations, he could gain no advantages but the taking of Huy and Limbourg, places of ſmall conſequence. The prince of Orange, with a conſiderable army, oppoſed him in all his motions; and neither ſide was willing, without a viſible advantage, to hazard a general action, which might be attended either with the entire loſs of Flanders on the one hand, or the invaſion of France on the other. Lewis, tired of ſo unactive a campaign, returned to Verſailles; and the whole ſummer paſſed in the Low Countries without any memorable event.

TURENNE commanded on the Upper Rhine, in oppoſition to his great rival Montecuculi, general of the Imperialiſts. The object of the latter was to paſs the Rhine, to penetrate into Alſace, Lorraine, or Burgundy, and to fix his quarters in theſe provinces: The aim of the former was to guard the French frontiers, and to diſappoint all the ſchemes of his enemy. The moſt conſummate ſkill was diſplayed on both ſides; and if any ſuperiority appeared in Turenne's conduct, it was chiefly aſcribed to his greater vigour of body, by which he was enabled to inſpect all the poſts in perſon, and could on the ſpot take the juſteſt meaſures for the execution of his deſigns. By poſting himſelf on the German ſide of the Rhine, he not only kept Montecuculi from paſſing that river: He had alſo laid his plan in ſo maſterly a manner, that, in a few days, he muſt have obliged the Germans to decamp, and have gained a conſiderable advantage over them; when a period was put to his life, by a random ſhot, which ſtruck him on the breaſt as he was taking a view of the enemy. The conſternation of his army was inexpreſſible. The French troops, who, a moment before,

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before, were assured of victory, now considered themselves as entirely vanquished; and the Germans, who would have been glad to compound for a safe retreat, expected no less than the total destruction of their enemy. But de Lorges, nephew to Turenne, succeeded him in the command, and possessed a great share of the genius and capacity of his predecessor. By his skilful operations, the French were enabled to repass the Rhine, without considerable loss; and this retreat was deemed equally glorious with the greatest victory. The valour of the English troops, who were placed in the rear, greatly contributed to save the French army. They had been seized with the same passion as the native troops of France, for their brave general, and fought with ardour to revenge his death on the Germans. The duke of Marlborough, then captain Churchill, here learned the rudiments of that art, which he afterwards practised with such fatal success against France.

The prince of Condé left the army in Flanders under the command of Luxembourg; and carrying with him a considerable reinforcement, succeeded to Turenne's command. He defended Alsace from the Germans, who had passed the Rhine, and invaded that province. He obliged them first to raise the siege of Hagenau, then that of Saberne. He eluded all their attempts to bring him to a battle. And having dexterously prevented them from establishing themselves in Alsace, he forced them, notwithstanding their superiority of numbers, to repass the Rhine, and to take up winter-quarters in their own country.

After the death of Turenne, a detachment of the German army was sent to the siege of Treves: An enterprise, in which the Imperialists, the Spaniards, the Palatine, the duke of Lorraine, and many other princes, passionately concurred. The project was well concerted, and executed with vigour.

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Mareſchal Crequi, on the other hand, collected an army, and advanced with a view of forcing the Germans to raiſe the ſiege. They left a detachment to guard their lines, and, under the command of the dukes of Zell and Oſnaburgh, marched in queſt of the enemy. At Conſarbric, they fell unexpectedly, and with ſuperior numbers, on Crequi, and put him to rout. He eſcaped with four attendants only; and throwing himſelf into Treves, reſolved, by a vigorous defence, to make atonement for his former error or misfortune. The garriſon was brave, but not abandoned to that total deſpair by which their governor was actuated. They mutinied againſt his obſtinacy; capitulated for themſelves; and becauſe he refuſed to ſign the capitulation, they delivered him a priſoner into the hands of the enemy.

It is remarkable that this defeat, given to Crequi, is almoſt the only one which the French received at land, from Rocroi to Blenheim, during the courſe of above ſixty years; and theſe too, full of bloody wars againſt potent and martial enemies: Their victories almoſt equal the number of years during that period. Such was the vigour and good conduct of that monarchy! And ſuch too were the reſources and refined policy of the other European nations, by which they were enabled to repair their loſſes, and ſtill to confine that mighty power nearly within its ancient limits! A fifth part of theſe victories would have ſufficed, in another period, to have given to France the empire of Europe.

The Swedes had been engaged, by the payment of large ſubſidies, to take part with Lewis, and invade the territories of the elector of Brandenburgh in Pomerania. That elector, joined by ſome Imperialiſts from Sileſia, fell upon them with bravery and ſucceſs. He ſoon obliged them to evacuate his part of that country, and he purſued them into their own. He had an interview with the king of

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Denmark, who had now joined the confederates, and reſolved to declare war againſt Sweden. Theſe princes concerted meaſures for puſhing the victory.

To all theſe misfortunes againſt foreign enemies were added ſome domeſtic inſurrections of the common people in Guienne and Britanny. Though ſoon ſuppreſſed, they divided the force and attention of Lewis. The only advantage, gained by the French, was at ſea. Meſſina in Sicily had revolted; and a fleet under the duke de Vivonne was diſpatched to ſupport the rebels. The Dutch had ſent a ſquadron to aſſiſt the Spaniards. A battle enſued, where de Ruyter was killed. This event alone was thought equivalent to a victory.

THE French, who, twelve years before, had ſcarcely a ſhip of war in any of their harbours, had raiſed themſelves, by means of perſeverance and policy, to be, in their preſent force, though not in their reſources, the firſt maritime power in Europe. The Dutch, while in alliance with them againſt England, had ſupplied them with ſeveral veſſels, and had taught them the rudiments of the difficult art of ſhip-building. The Engliſh next, when in alliance with them againſt Holland, inſtructed them in the method of fighting their ſhips, and of preſerving order in naval engagements. Lewis availed himſelf of every opportunity to aggrandize his people, while Charles, ſunk in indolence and pleaſure, neglected all the noble arts of government; or if at any time he rouſed himſelf from his lethargy, that induſtry, by reaſon of the unhappy projects which he embraced, was often more pernicious to the public than his inactivity itſelf. He was as anxious to promote the naval power of France, as if the ſafety of his crown had depended on it; and many of the plans executed in that kingdom, were firſt, it is ſaid [d], digeſted and corrected by him.

[d] Welwood, Burnet, Coke.

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THE ſucceſſes of the allies had been conſiderable the laſt campaign; but the Spaniards and Imperialiſts well knew, that France was not yet ſufficiently broken, nor willing to ſubmit to the terms which they reſolved to impoſe upon her. Though they could not refuſe the king's mediation, and Nimeguen, after many difficulties, was at laſt fixed on as the place of congreſs; yet, under one pretence or other, they ſtill delayed ſending their ambaſſadors, and no progreſs was made in the negotiation. Lord Berkeley, ſir William Temple, and ſir Lionel Jenkins, were the Engliſh miniſters at Nimeguen. The Dutch, who were impatient for peace, ſoon appeared: Lewis, who hoped to divide the allies, and who knew that he himſelf could neither be ſeduced nor forced into a diſadvantageous peace, ſent ambaſſadors: The Swedes, who hoped to recover by treaty what they had loſt by arms, were alſo forward to negotiate. But as theſe powers could not proceed of themſelves to ſettle terms, the congreſs, hitherto, ſerved merely as an amuſement to the public.

Congreſs of Nimeguen.

IT was by the events of the campaign, not the conferences among the negotiators, that the articles of peace were to be determined. The Spaniſh towns, ill fortified and worſe defended, made but a feeble reſiſtance to Lewis; who, by laying up magazines during the winter, was able to take the field early in the ſpring, before the forage could be found in the open country. In the month of April he laid ſiege to Condé, and took it by ſtorm in four days. Having ſent the duke of Orleans to beſiege Bouchaine, a ſmall but important fortreſs, he poſted himſelf ſo advantageouſly with his main army, as to hinder the confederates from relieving it, or fighting without diſadvantage. The prince of Orange, in ſpite of the difficulties of the ſeaſon, and the want of proviſions, came in ſight of the French army; but his induſtry ſerved to no other purpoſe than to

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render him ſpectator of the ſurrender of Bouchaine. Both armies ſtood in awe of each other, and were unwilling to hazard an action, which might be attended with the moſt important conſequences. Lewis, though he wanted not perſonal courage, was little enterpriſing in the field; and being reſolved this campaign to reſt contented with the advantages which he had ſo early obtained, he thought proper to intruſt his army to mareſchal Schomberg, and retired himſelf to Verſailles. After his departure, the prince of Orange laid ſiege to Maeſtricht; but meeting with an obſtinate reſiſtance, he was obliged, on the approach of Schomberg, who in the mean time had taken Aire, to raiſe the ſiege. He was incapable of yielding to adverſity, or bending under misfortunes: But he began to foreſee, that, by the negligence and errors of his allies, the war in Flanders muſt neceſſarily have a very unfortunate iſſue.

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On the Upper Rhine, Philipſbourg was taken by the Imperialiſts. In Pomerania, the Swedes were ſo unſucceſsful againſt the Danes and Brandenburghers, that they ſeemed to be loſing apace all thoſe poſſeſſions, which, with ſo much valour and good fortune, they had acquired in Germany.

About the beginning of winter, the congreſs of Nimeguen was pretty full, and the plenipotentiaries of the emperor and Spain, two powers ſtrictly conjoined by blood and alliance, at laſt appeared. The Dutch had threatened, if they abſented themſelves any longer, to proceed to a ſeparate treaty with France. In the conferences and negotiations, the diſpoſition of the parties became every day more apparent.

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the diviſions and delays of the Germans, prognoſticated nothing but diſgrace and misfortune. Their commerce languiſhed; and what gave them ſtill greater anxiety, the commerce of England, by reaſon of her neutrality, flouriſhed extremely; and they were apprehenſive, leſt advantages, once loſt, would never thoroughly be regained. They had themſelves no farther motive for continuing the war, than to ſecure a good frontier to Flanders; but gratitude to their allies ſtill engaged them to try whether another campaign might procure a peace, which would give general ſatisfaction. The prince of Orange, urged by motives of honour, of ambition, and of animoſity againſt France, endeavoured to keep them ſteady to this reſolution.

The Spaniards, not to mention the other incurable weakneſſes into which their monarchy was fallen, were diſtracted with domeſtic diſſenſions between the parties of the queen regent and don John, natural brother to their young ſovereign. Though unable of themſelves to defend Flanders, they were reſolute not to conclude a peace, which would leave it expoſed to every aſſault or inroad; and while they made the moſt magnificent promiſes to the States, their real truſt was in the protection of England. They ſaw that, if that ſmall but important territory were once ſubdued by France, the Hollanders, expoſed to ſo terrible a power, would fall into dependance, and would endeavour, by ſubmiſſions, to ward off that deſtruction to which a war, in the heart of their ſtate, muſt neceſſarily expoſe them. They believed that Lewis, ſenſible how much greater advantages he might reap from the alliance than from the ſubjection of the republic, which muſt ſcatter its people and depreſs its commerce, would be ſatisfied with very moderate conditions, and would turn his enterpriſes againſt his other neighbours. They thought it impoſſible but the people and parliament of England, foreſeeing theſe

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obvious conſequences, muſt at laſt force the king to take part in the affairs of the continent, in which their intereſts were ſo deeply concerned. And they truſted, that even the king himſelf, on the approach of ſo great a danger, muſt open his eyes, and ſacrifice his prejudices in favour of France, to the ſafety of his own dominions.

Uncertain conduct of the king.

But Charles here found himſelf entangled in ſuch oppoſite motives and engagements, as he had not reſolution enough to break, or patience to unravel. On the one hand, he always regarded his alliance with France as a ſure reſource in caſe of any commotions among his own ſubjects; and whatever ſchemes he might ſtill retain for enlarging his authority, or altering the eſtabliſhed religion, it was from that quarter alone he could expect aſſiſtance. He had actually in ſecret ſold his neutrality to France, and he received remittances of a million of livres a-year, which was afterwards increaſed to two millions; a conſiderable ſupply in the preſent embarraſſed ſtate of his revenue. And he dreaded leſt the parliament ſhould treat him as they had formerly done his father; and after they had engaged him in a war on the continent, ſhould take advantage of his neceſſities, and make him purchaſe ſupplies by ſacrificing his prerogative and abandoning his miniſters.

On the other hand, the cries of his people and parliament, ſeconded by Danby, Arlington, and moſt of his miniſters, incited him to take part with the allies, and to correct the unequal balance of power in Europe. He might apprehend danger from oppoſing ſuch earneſt deſires: He might hope for large ſupplies if he concurred with them: And however inglorious and indolent his diſpoſition, the renown of acting as arbiter of Europe would probably at intervals rouſe him from his lethargy, and move him to ſupport the high character with which he ſtood inveſted.

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IT is worthy of obſervation, that, during this period, the king was, by every one, abroad and at home, by France and by the allies, allowed to be the undiſputed arbiter of Europe; and no terms of peace, which he would have preſcribed, could have been refuſed by either party. Though France afterwards found means to reſiſt the ſame alliance, joined with England; yet was ſhe then obliged to make ſuch violent efforts as quite exhauſted her; and it was the utmoſt neceſſity which puſhed her to find reſources, far ſurpaſſing her own expectations. Charles was ſenſible, that, ſo long as the war continued abroad, he ſhould never enjoy eaſe at home, from the impatience and importunity of his ſubjects; yet could he not reſolve to impoſe a peace by openly joining himſelf with either party. Terms advantageous to the allies muſt loſe him the friendſhip of France: The contrary would enrage his parliament. Between theſe views, he perpetually fluctuated; and from his conduct, it is obſervable, that a careleſs, remiſs diſpoſition, agitated by oppoſite motives, is capable of as great inconſiſtencies as are incident even to the greateſt imbecility and folly.

15th Feb. A parliament.

THE parliament was aſſembled; and the king made them a plauſible ſpeech, in which he warned them againſt all differences among themſelves; expreſſed a reſolution to do his part for bringing their conſultations to a happy iſſue; and offered his conſent to any laws for the farther ſecurity of their religion, liberty, and property. He then told them of the decayed condition of the navy; and aſked money for reparing it: He informed them, that part of his revenue, the additional exciſe, was ſoon to expire: And he added theſe words, "You may at any time "ſee the yearly eſtabliſhed expence of the govern-"ment, by which it will appear, that, the con-"ſtant and unavoidable charge being paid, there "will remain no overplus towards anſwering thoſe "contingencies, which may happen in all king-

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" doms, and which have been a conſiderable bur-
" then on me this laſt year."

BEFORE the parliament entered upon buſineſs, they were ſtopped by a doubt concerning the legality of their meeting. It had been enacted by an old law of Edward III. " That parliaments ſhould " be held once every year, or oftner, if need be." The laſt prorogation had been longer than a year; and being ſuppoſed on that account illegal, it was pretended to be equivalent to a diſſolution. The conſequence ſeems by no means juſt; and beſides, a later act, that which repealed the triennial law, had determined, that it was neceſſary to hold parliaments only once in three years. Such weight, however, was put on this cavil, that Buckingham, Shafteſbury, Saliſbury, and Wharton, inſiſted ſtrenuouſly in the houſe of peers on the invalidity of the parliament, and the nullity of all its future acts. For ſuch dangerous poſitions, they were ſent to the Tower, there to remain during the pleaſure of his majeſty and the houſe. Buckingham, Saliſbury, and Wharton made ſubmiſſions, and were ſoon after releaſed. But Shafteſbury, more obſtinate in his temper, and deſirous of diſtinguiſhing himſelf by his adherence to liberty, ſought the remedy of law; and being rejected by the judges, he was, at laſt, after a twelvemonth's impriſonment, obliged to make the ſame ſubmiſſions; upon which he was alſo releaſed.

THE commons at firſt ſeemed to proceed with temper. They granted the ſum of 586,000 pounds, for building thirty ſhips; though they ſtrictly appropriated the money to that ſervice. Eſtimates were given in of the expence; but it was afterwards found that they fell ſhort near 100,000 pounds. They alſo voted, agreeably to the king's requeſt, the continuance of the additional exciſe for three years. This exciſe had been granted for nine years

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in 1668. Every thing ſeemed to promiſe a peaceable and an eaſy ſeſſion.

1677. Campaign of 1677.

But the parliament was rouſed from this tranquillity by the news received from abroad. The French king had taken the field in the middle of February, and laid ſiege to Valenciennes, which he carried in a few days by ſtorm. He next inveſted both Cambray and St. Omers. The prince of Orange, alarmed with his progreſs, haſtily aſſembled an army, and marched to the relief of St. Omers. He was encountered by the French, under the duke of Orleans and mareſchal Luxembourg. The prince poſſeſſed great talents for war; courage, activity, vigilance, patience; but ſtill he was inferior in genius to thoſe conſummate generals oppoſed to him by Lewis; and though he always found means to repair his loſſes, and to make head in a little time againſt the victors, he was, during his whole life, unſucceſsful. By a maſterly movement of Luxembourg, he was here defeated, and obliged to retreat to Ypres. Cambray and St. Omers were ſoon after ſurrendered to Lewis.

This ſucceſs, derived from ſuch great power and ſuch wiſe conduct, infuſed a juſt terror into the Engliſh parliament. They addreſſed the king, repreſenting the danger to which the kingdom was expoſed from the greatneſs of France, and praying that his majeſty, by ſuch alliances as he ſhould think fit, would both ſecure his own dominions and the Spaniſh Netherlands, and thereby quiet the fears of his people. The king, deſirous of eluding this application, which he conſidered as a kind of attack on his meaſures, replied in general terms, that he would uſe all means for the preſervation of Flanders, conſiſtent with the peace and ſafety of his kingdoms. This anſwer was an evaſion, or rather a denial. The commons, therefore, thought proper to be more explicit. They entreated him not to defer the entering into ſuch alliances as might attain that

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that great end: And in caſe war with the French king ſhould be the reſult of his meaſures, they promiſed to grant him all the aids and ſupplies, which would enable him to ſupport the honour and intereſt of the nation. The king was alſo more explicit in his reply. He told them, that the only way to prevent danger, was to put him in a condition to make preparations for their ſecurity. This meſſage was underſtood to be a demand of money. The parliament accordingly empowered the king to borrow on the additional exciſe 200,000 pounds at ſeven per cent.: A very ſmall ſum indeed; but which they deemed ſufficient, with the ordinary revenue, to equip a good ſquadron, and thereby put the nation in ſecurity, till farther reſolutions ſhould be taken.

But this conceſſion fell far ſhort of the king's expectations. He therefore informed them, that, unleſs they granted him the ſum of 600,000 pounds upon new funds, it would not be poſſible for him, without expoſing the nation to manifeſt danger, *to ſpeak or act thoſe things*, which would anſwer the end of their ſeveral addreſſes. The houſe took this meſſage into conſideration: But before they came to any reſolution, the king ſent for them to Whitehall, where he told them, upon the word of a king, that they ſhould not repent any truſt which they would repoſe in him for the ſafety of his kingdom; that he would not for any conſideration break credit with them, or employ their money to other uſes than thoſe for which they intended it; but that he would not hazard, either his own ſafety or theirs, by taking any vigorous meaſures, or forming new alliances, till he were in a better condition both to defend his ſubjects and offend his enemies. This ſpeech brought affairs to a ſhort iſſue. The king required them to truſt him with a large ſum: He pawned his royal word for their ſecurity: They muſt either run the riſque of loſing their money, or fail of thoſe alliances which they had projected, and

at

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at the ſame time declare to all the world the higheſt diſtruſt of their ſovereign.

Parliament's diſtruſt of the king.

But there were many reaſons which determined the houſe of commons to put no truſt in the king. They conſidered, that the pretence of danger was obviouſly groundleſs; while the French were oppoſed by ſuch powerful alliances on the continent, while the king was maſter of a good fleet at ſea, and while all his ſubjects were ſo heartily united in oppoſition to foreign enemies. That the only juſtifiable reaſon, therefore, of Charles's backwardneſs, was not the apprehenſion of danger from abroad, but a diffidence, which he might perhaps have entertained of his parliament; leſt, after engaging him in foreign alliances for carrying on war, they ſhould take advantage of his neceſſities, and extort from him conceſſions dangerous to his royal dignity. That this parliament, by their paſt conduct, had given no foundation for ſuch ſuſpicions, and were ſo far from purſuing any ſiniſter ends, that they had granted ſupplies for the firſt Dutch war; for maintaining the triple league, though concluded without their advice; even for carrying on the ſecond Dutch war, which was entered into contrary to their opinion, and contrary to the manifeſt intereſts of the nation. That, on the other hand, the king had, by former meaſures, excited very reaſonable jealouſies in his people, and did with a bad grace require at preſent their truſt and confidence. That he had not ſcrupled to demand ſupplies for maintaining the triple league, at the very moment he was concerting meaſures for breaking it, and had accordingly employed to that purpoſe the ſupplies which he had obtained by thoſe deluſive pretences. That his union with France, during the war againſt Holland, muſt have been founded on projects the moſt dangerous to his people; and as the ſame union was ſtill ſecretly maintained, it might juſtly

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be feared that the ſame projects were not yet entirely abandoned. That he could not ſeriouſly intend to proſecute vigorous meaſures againſt France; ſince he had ſo long remained entirely unconcerned during ſuch obvious dangers; and, till prompted by his parliament, whoſe proper buſineſs it was not to take the lead in thoſe parts of adminiſtration, had ſuſpended all his activity. That if he really meant to enter into a cordial union with his people, he would have taken the firſt ſtep, and have endeavoured, by putting truſt in them, to reſtore that confidence, which he himſelf, by his raſh conduct, had firſt violated. That it was in vain to aſk ſo ſmall a ſum as 600,000 pounds, in order to ſecure him againſt the future attempts of the parliament; ſince that ſum muſt ſoon be exhauſted by a war with France, and he muſt again fall into that dependance, which was become, in ſome degree, eſſential to the conſtitution. That if he would form the neceſſary alliances, that ſum, or a greater, would inſtantly be voted; nor could there be any reaſon to dread, that the parliament would immediately deſert meaſures, in which they were engaged by their honour, their inclination, and the public intereſt. That the real ground, therefore, of the king's refuſal, was neither apprehenſion of danger from foreign enemies, nor jealouſy of parliamentary encroachments; but a deſire of obtaining the money, which he intended, notwithſtanding his royal word, to employ to other purpoſes. And that, by uſing ſuch diſhonourable means to ſo ignoble an end, he rendered himſelf ſtill more unworthy the confidence of his people.

THE houſe of commons was now regularly divided into two parties, the court and the country. Some were inliſted in the court-party by offices, nay, a few by bribes ſecretly given them; a practice firſt begun by Clifford, a dangerous miniſter: But great numbers

numbers were attached merely by inclination; ſo far as they eſteemed the meaſures of the court agreeable to the intereſts of the nation. Private views and faction had likewiſe drawn ſeveral into the country party: But there were alſo many of that party, who had no other object than the public good. Theſe diſintereſted members on both ſides fluctuated between the factions; and gave the ſuperiority ſometimes to the court, ſometimes to the oppoſition [e]. In the preſent emergence, a general diſtruſt of the king prevailed; and the parliament reſolved not to hazard their money, in expectation of alliances, which, they believed, were never intended to be formed. Inſtead of granting the ſupply, they voted an addreſs, wherein they "beſought his majeſty to enter into a league, offenſive and defenſive, with the States General of the United Provinces, againſt the growth and power of the French king, and for the preſervation of the Spaniſh Netherlands; and to make ſuch other alliances with the confederates as ſhould appear fit and uſeful to that end." They ſupported their advice with reaſons; and promiſed ſpeedy and effectual ſupplies, for preſerving his majeſty's honour and enſuring the ſafety of the public. The king pretended the higheſt anger at this addreſs, which he repreſented as a dangerous encroachment upon his prerogative. He reproved the commons in ſevere terms; and ordered them immediately to be adjourned.

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IT is certain, that this was the critical moment, when the king both might with eaſe have preſerved the balance of power in Europe, which it has ſince coſt this iſland great expence of blood and treaſure to reſtore, and might by perſeverance have at laſt regained, in ſome tolerable meaſure, after all paſt 8th May.

[e] Temple's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 458.

errors,

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errors, the confidence of his people. This opportunity being neglected, the wound became incurable; and notwithſtanding *his* momentary appearances of vigour againſt France and popery, and *their* momentary inclinations to rely on his faith; *he* was ſtill believed to be at bottom engaged in the ſame intereſts, and *they* ſoon elapſed into diſtruſt and jealouſy. The ſecret memoirs of this reign, which have ſince been publiſhed [f], prove beyond a doubt, that the king had at this time concerted meaſures with France, and had no intention to enter into a war in favour of the allies. He had entertained no view, therefore, even when he pawned his ROYAL WORD to his people, than to procure a grant of money; and he truſted, that, while he eluded their expectations, he could not afterwards want pretences for palliating his conduct.

NEGOTIATIONS meanwhile were carried on between France and Holland, and an eventual treaty was concluded; that is, all their differences were adjuſted, provided they could afterwards ſatisfy their allies on both ſides. This work, though in appearance difficult, ſeemed to be extremely forwarded, by farther bad ſucceſſes on the part of the confederates, and by the great impatience of the Hollanders; when a new event happened, which promiſed a more proſperous iſſue to the quarrel with France, and revived the hopes of all the Engliſh, who underſtood the intereſts of their country.

[f] Such as the letters, which paſſed betwixt Danby and Montague, the king's ambaſſador at Paris; Temple's Memoirs, and his Letters. In theſe laſt, we ſee that the king never made any propoſals of terms but what were advantageous to France, and the prince of Orange believed them to have always been concerted with the French ambaſſador. Vol. i. p. 439.

In ſir John Dalrymple's Appendix, p. 103. it appears that the king had ſigned himſelf, without the participation of his miniſters, a ſecret treaty with France, and had obtained a penſion on the promiſe of his neutrality: A fact, which renders his *royal word*, ſolemnly given to his ſubjects, one of the moſt diſhonourable and moſt ſcandalous acts that ever proceeded from a throne.

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THE king ſaw, with regret, the violent diſcontents which prevailed in the nation, and which ſeemed every day to augment upon him. Deſirous by his natural temper to be eaſy himſelf, and to make every body elſe eaſy, he ſought expedients to appeaſe thoſe murmurs, which, as they were very diſagreeable for the preſent, might in their conſequences prove extremely dangerous. He knew that, during the late war with Holland, the malcontents at home had made applications to the prince of Orange; and if he continued ſtill to neglect the prince's intereſts, and to thwart the inclinations of his own people, he apprehended leſt their common complaints ſhould cement a laſting union between them. He ſaw that the religion of the duke inſpired the nation with diſmal apprehenſions; and though he had obliged his brother to allow the young princeſſes to be educated in the proteſtant faith, ſomething farther, he thought, was neceſſary, in order to ſatisfy the nation. He entertained, therefore, propoſals for marrying the prince of Orange to the lady Mary, the elder princeſs, and heir apparent to the crown (for the duke had no male iſſue), and he hoped, by ſo tempting an offer, to engage him entirely in his intereſts. A peace he purpoſed to make; ſuch as would ſatisfy France, and ſtill preſerve his connections with that crown: And he intended to ſanctify it by the approbation of the prince, whom he found to be extremely revered in England, and reſpected throughout Europe. All the reaſons for this alliance were ſeconded by the ſolicitations of Danby, and alſo of Temple, who was at that time in England: And Charles at laſt granted permiſſion to the prince, when the campaign ſhould be over, to pay him a viſit.

THE king very graciouſly received his nephew at Newmarket. He would have entered immediately upon buſineſs; but the prince deſired firſt to be acquainted with the lady Mary: And he declared,

10th Oct.

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that, contrary to the uſual ſentiments of perſons of his rank, he placed a great part of happineſs in domeſtic ſatisfaction, and would not, upon any conſideration of intereſt or politics, match himſelf with a perſon diſagreeable to him. He was introduced to the princeſs, whom he found in the bloom of youth, and extremely amiable both in her perſon and her behaviour. The king now thought that he had a double tie upon him, and might ſafely expect his compliance with every propoſal: He was ſurpriſed to find the prince decline all diſcourſe of buſineſs, and refuſe to concert any terms for the general peace, till his marriage ſhould be finiſhed. He foreſaw, he ſaid, from the ſituation of affairs, that his allies were likely to have hard terms; and he never would expoſe himſelf to the reproach of having ſacrificed their intereſts to promote his own purpoſes. Charles ſtill believed, notwithſtanding the cold, ſevere manner of the prince, that he would abate of this rigid punctilio of honour; and he protracted the time, hoping, by his own inſinuation and addreſs, as well as by the allurements of love and ambition, to win him to compliance. One day, Temple found the prince in very bad humour, repenting that he had ever come to England, and reſolute in a few days to leave it: But before he went, the king, he ſaid, muſt chuſe the terms on which they ſhould hereafter live together: He was ſure it muſt be like the greateſt friends or the greateſt enemies: And he deſired Temple to inform his maſter next morning of theſe intentions. Charles was ſtruck with this menace, and foreſaw how the prince's departure would be interpreted by the people. He reſolved, therefore, immediately to yield with a good grace; and having paid a compliment to his nephew's honeſty, he told Temple, that the marriage was concluded, and deſired him to inform the duke of it, as of an affair already reſolved on. The duke ſeemed ſurpriſed; but yielded a prompt

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prompt obedience: Which, he ſaid, was his conſtant maxim to whatever he found to be the king's pleaſure. No meaſure, during this reign, gave ſuch general ſatisfaction. All parties ſtrove who ſhould moſt applaud it. And even Arlington, who had been kept out of the ſecret, told the prince, "That "ſome things, good in themſelves, were ſpoiled "by the manner of doing them, as ſome things "bad were mended by it; but he would confeſs, "that this was a thing ſo good in itſelf, that the "manner of doing it could not ſpoil it."

23d Oct. Marriage of the prince of Orange with the lady Mary.

THIS marriage was a great ſurpriſe to Lewis, who, accuſtomed to govern every thing in the Engliſh court, now found ſo important a ſtep taken, not only without his conſent, but without his knowledge or participation. A conjunction of England with the allies, and a vigorous war in oppoſition to French ambition, were the conſequences immediately expected, both abroad and at home: But to check theſe ſanguine hopes, the king, a few days after the marriage, prolonged the adjournment of the parliament from the third of December to the fourth of April. This term was too late for granting ſupplies, or making preparations for war; and could be choſen by the king for no other reaſon, than as an atonement to France for his conſent to the marriage. It appears alſo, that Charles ſecretly received from Lewis the ſum of two millions of livres on account of this important ſervice[a].

Plan of peace.

THE king, however, entered into conſultations with the prince, together with Danby and Temple, concerning the terms which it would be proper to require of France. After ſome debate, it was agreed, that France ſhould reſtore Lorrain to the duke; with Tournay, Valenciennes, Condé, Aeth, Charleroi, Courtray, Oudenarde, and Binche, to Spain, in order to form a good frontier for the Low Countries. The prince inſiſted that Franchecomté

[a] Sir John Dalrymple's Appendix, p. 112.

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ſhould likewiſe be reſtored; and Charles thought, that, becauſe he had patrimonial eſtates of great value in that province, and deemed his property more ſecure in the hands of Spain, he was engaged by ſuch views to be obſtinate in that point: But the prince declared, that to procure but one good town to the Spaniards in Flanders, he would willingly relinquiſh all thoſe poſſeſſions. As the king ſtill inſiſted on the impoſſibility of wreſting Franche-comté from Lewis, the prince was obliged to acquieſce.

NOTWITHSTANDING this conceſſion to France, the projected peace was favourable to the allies; and it was a ſufficient indication of vigour in the king, that he had given his aſſent to it. He farther agreed to ſend over a miniſter inſtantly to Paris, in order to propoſe theſe terms. This miniſter was to enter into no treaty: He was to allow but two days for the acceptance or refuſal of the terms: Upon the expiration of theſe, he was preſently to return: And in caſe of refuſal, the king promiſed to enter immediately into the confederacy. To carry ſo imperious a meſſage, and ſo little expected from the Engliſh court, Temple was the perſon pitched on, whoſe declared averſion to the French intereſt was not likely to make him fail of vigour and promptitude in the execution of his commiſſion.

BUT Charles next day felt a relenting in this aſſumed vigour. Inſtead of Temple he diſpatched the earl of Feverſham, a creature of the duke's, and a Frenchman by birth: And he ſaid, that the meſſage being harſh in itſelf, it was needleſs to aggravate it by a diſagreeable meſſenger. The prince left London; and the king, at his departure, aſſured him that he never would abate in the leaſt point of the ſcheme concerted, and would enter into war with Lewis, if he rejected it.

Negotiations.

LEWIS received the meſſage with ſeeming gentleneſs and complacency. He told Feverſham, that the

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the king of England well knew that he might always be maſter of the peace; but ſome of the towns in Flanders it ſeemed very hard to demand, eſpecially Tournay, upon whoſe fortifications ſuch immenſe ſums had been expended: He would therefore take ſome ſhort time to conſider of an anſwer. Feverſham ſaid, that he was limited to two days ſtay: But when that time was elapſed, he was prevailed on to remain ſome few days longer; and he came away at laſt without any poſitive anſwer. Lewis ſaid, that he hoped his brother would not break with him for one or two towns: And with regard to them too, he would ſend orders to his ambaſſador at London to treat with the king himſelf. Charles was ſoftened by the ſoftneſs of France; and the blow was thus artfully eluded. The French ambaſſador, Barillon, owned at laſt, that he had orders to yield all except Tournay, and even to treat about ſome equivalent for that fortreſs, if the king abſolutely inſiſted upon it. The prince was gone, who had given ſpirit to the Engliſh court; and the negotiation began to draw out into meſſages and returns from Paris.

By intervals, however, the king could rouſe himſelf, and ſhow ſtill ſome firmneſs and reſolution. Finding that affairs were not likely to come to any concluſion with France, he ſummoned, notwithſtanding the long adjournment, the parliament on the fifteenth of January; an unuſual meaſure, and capable of giving alarm to the French court. Temple was ſent for to the council, and the king told him, that he intended he ſhould go to Holland, in order to form a treaty of alliance with the States; and that the purpoſe of it ſhould be, like the triple league, to force both France and Spain to accept of the terms propoſed. Temple was ſorry to find this act of vigour qualified by ſuch a regard to France, and by ſuch an appearance of indifference and neutrality between the parties. He told the king, that the reſolution agreed on, was to begin the war in conjunc-

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tion with all the confederates, in case of no direct and immediate answer from France: That this measure

1677. would satisfy the prince, the allies, and the people of England; advantages which could not be expected from such an alliance with Holland alone: That France would be disobliged, and Spain likewise; nor would the Dutch be satisfied with such a faint imitation of the triple league, a measure concerted when they were equally at peace with both parties. For these reasons, Temple declined the employment; and Lawrence Hyde, second son of chancellor Clarendon, was sent in his place.

1678. The prince of Orange could not regard without contempt such symptoms of weakness and vigour conjoined in the English counsels. He was resolved, however, to make the best of a measure which he did not approve; and as Spain secretly consented that her ally should form a league, which was seemingly directed against her as well as France, but

6th Jan. which was to fall only on the latter, the States concluded the treaty in the terms proposed by the king.

28th Jan. Meanwhile the English parliament met, after some new adjournments; and the king was astonished, that, notwithstanding the resolute measures which, he thought, he had taken, great distrust and jealousy and discontent were apt, at intervals, still to prevail among the members. Though in his speech he had allowed that a good peace could no longer be expected from negotiation, and assured them that he was resolved to enter into a war for that purpose; the commons did not forbear to insert in their reply several harsh and even unreasonable clauses. Upon his reproving them, they seemed penitent, and voted, that they would assist his majesty in the prosecution of the war. A fleet of ninety sail, an army of thirty thousand men, and a million of money, were also voted. Great difficulties were made by the commons with regard to the army, which the house,

houſe, judging by paſt meaſures, believed to be intended more againſt the liberties of England than againſt the progreſs of the French monarch. To this perilous ſituation had the king reduced both himſelf and the nation. In all debates, ſevere ſpeeches were made, and were received with ſeeming approbation: The duke and the treaſurer began to be apprehenſive of impeachments: Many motions againſt the king's miniſters were loſt by a ſmall majority: The commons appointed a day to conſider the ſtate of the kingdom with regard to popery: And they even went ſo far as to vote, that, how urgent ſoever the occaſion, they would lay no farther charge on the people, till ſecured againſt the prevalence of the catholic party. In ſhort, the parliament was impatient for war whenever the king ſeemed averſe to it; but grew ſuſpicious of ſome ſiniſter deſign as ſoon as he complied with their requeſts, and ſeemed to enter into their meaſures.

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THE king was enraged at this laſt vote: He reproached Temple with his popular notions, as he termed them; and aſked him how he thought the houſe of commons could be truſted for carrying on the war, ſhould it be entered on, when in the very commencement they made ſuch declarations? The uncertainties indeed of Charles's conduct were ſo multiplied, and the jealouſies on both ſides ſo incurable, that even thoſe who approached neareſt the ſcene of action could not determine, whether the king ever ſeriouſly meant to enter into a war, or whether, if he did, the houſe of commons would not have taken advantage of his neceſſities, and made him purchaſe ſupplies by a great ſacrifice of his authority [g].

THE king of France knew how to avail himſelf of all the advantages which theſe diſtractions afforded

[g] Temple, vol. i. p. 461.

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him. By his emiſſaries, he repreſented to the Dutch, the imprudence of their depending on England; where an indolent king, averſe to all war, eſpecially with France, and irreſolute in his meaſures, was actuated only by the uncertain breath of a factious parliament. To the ariſtocratical party, he remarked the danger of the prince's alliance with the royal family of England, and revived their apprehenſions; leſt, in imitation of his father, who had been honoured with the ſame alliance, he ſhould violently attempt to enlarge his authority, and enſlave his native country. In order to enforce theſe motives with farther terrors, he himſelf took the field very early in the ſpring; and after threatening Luxembourg, Mons, and Namur, he ſuddenly ſat down before Ghent and Ypres, and in a few weeks made himſelf maſter of both places. This ſucceſs gave great alarm to the Hollanders, who were no-wiſe ſatisfied with the conduct of England, or with the ambiguous treaty lately concluded; and it quickened all their advances towards an accommodation.

Campaign of 1678.

IMMEDIATELY after the parliament had voted the ſupply, the king began to inliſt forces; and ſuch was the ardour of the Engliſh for a war with France, that an army of above 20,000 men, to the aſtoniſhment of Europe, was completed in a few weeks. Three thouſand men, under the duke of Monmouth, were ſent over to ſecure Oſtend: Some regiments were recalled from the French ſervice: A fleet was fitted out with great diligence: And a quadruple alliance was projected between England, Holland, Spain, and the emperor.

BUT theſe vigorous meaſures received a ſudden damp from a paſſionate addreſs of the lower houſe; in which they juſtified all their paſt proceedings that had given diſguſt to the king; deſired to be acquainted with the meaſures taken by him; prayed him to diſmiſs evil counſellors; and named in particular the duke of Lauderdale, on whoſe removal they

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they ſtrenuouſly inſiſted. The king told them, that their addreſs was ſo extravagant, that he was not willing ſpeedily to give it the anſwer which it deſerved. And he began again to lend an ear to the propoſals of Lewis, who offered him great ſums of money, if he would conſent to France's making an advantageous peace with the allies.

Negotiations.

TEMPLE, though preſſed by the king, refuſed to have any concern in ſo diſhonourable a negotiation: But he informs us, that the king ſaid, there was one article propoſed, which ſo incenſed him, that, as long as he lived, he ſhould never forget it. Sir William goes no farther; but the editor of his works, the famous Dr. Swift, ſays, that the French, before they would agree to any payment, required as a preliminary, that the king ſhould engage never to keep above 8000 regular troops in Great Britain [a]. Charles broke into a paſſion. "Cod's-"fiſh," ſaid he, his uſual oath, "does my brother "of France think to ſerve me thus? Are all his "promiſes to make me abſolute maſter of my "people come to this? Or does he think *that* a "thing to be done with eight thouſand men?"

VAN BEVERNING was the Dutch ambaſſador at Nimeguen, a man of great authority with the States. He was eager for peace, and was perſuaded, that the reluctance of the king, and the jealouſies of the parliament, would for ever diſappoint the allies in their hopes of ſuccour from England. Orders were ſent him by the States to go to the French king at Ghent, and to concert the terms of a general treaty, as well as procure a preſent truce, for ſix weeks. The terms agreed on were much worſe for the Spaniards, than thoſe which had been planned by the king and the prince of Orange. Six towns,

[a] To wit, 3000 men for Scotland, and the uſual guards and garriſons in England, amounting to near 5000 men. Sir J. Dalrymple's App. p. 161.

ſome

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1678. ſome of them of no great importance, were to be reſtored to them: But Ypres, Condé, Valenciennes, and Tournay, in which conſiſted the chief ſtrength of their frontier, were to remain with France.

GREAT murmurs aroſe in England when it was known that Flanders was to be left in ſo defenceleſs a condition. The chief complaints were levelled againſt the king, who, by his concurrence at firſt, by his favour afterwards, and by his delays at laſt, had raiſed the power of France to ſuch an enormous height, that it threatened the general liberties of Europe. Charles, uneaſy under theſe imputations, dreading the conſequence of loſing the affections of his ſubjects, and perhaps diſguſted with the ſecret article propoſed by France, began to wiſh heartily for war, which, he hoped, would have reſtored him to his ancient popularity.

AN opportunity unexpectedly offered itſelf for his diſplaying theſe new diſpoſitions. While the miniſters at Nimeguen were concerting the terms of a general treaty, the marquis de Balbaces, the Spaniſh ambaſſador, aſked the ambaſſadors of France, at what time France intended to reſtore the ſix towns in Flanders. They made no difficulty in declaring that the king, their maſter, being obliged to ſee an entire reſtitution made to the Swedes of all they had loſt in the war, could not evacuate theſe towns till that crown had received ſatisfaction; and that this detention of places was the only means to induce the powers of the north to accept of the peace.

THE States immediately gave the king intelligence of a pretenſion, which might be attended with ſuch dangerous conſequences. The king was both ſurpriſed and angry. He immediately diſpatched Temple to concert with the States vigorous meaſures for oppoſing France. Temple in ſix days
26th July. concluded a treaty, by which Lewis was obliged to declare, within ſixteen days after the date, that he

would preſently evacuate the towns: And in caſe of his refuſal, Holland was bound to continue the war, and England to declare immediately againſt France, in conjunction with the whole confederacy. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

ALL theſe warlike meaſures were ſo ill ſeconded by the parliament, where even the French miniſters were ſuſpected, with reaſon [a], of carrying on ſome intrigues, that the commons renewed their former jealouſies againſt the king, and voted the army immediately to be diſbanded. The king by a meſſage repreſented the danger of diſarming before

[a] Sir John Dalrymple, in his Appendix, has given us, from Barillon's diſpatches in the ſecretary's office at Paris, a more particular detail of theſe intrigues. They were carried on with lord Ruſſel, lord Hollis, lord Berkſhire, the duke of Buckingham, Algernon Sydney, Montague, Bulſtrode, col. Titus, ſir Edward Harley, ſir John Baber, ſir Roger Hill, Boſcawen, Littleton, Powle, Harbord, Hamden, ſir Thomas Armſtrong, Hotham, Herbert, and ſome others of leſs note. Of theſe, lord Ruſſel and lord Hollis alone refuſed to touch any French money: All the others received preſents or bribes from Barillon. But we are to remark, that the party views of theſe men, and their well-founded jealouſies of the king and duke, engaged them, independently of the money, into the ſame meaſures that were ſuggeſted to them by the French ambaſſador. The intrigues of France, therefore, with the parliament were a mighty ſmall engine in the political machine. Thoſe with the king, which have always been known, were of infinitely greater conſequence. The ſums diſtributed to all theſe men, excepting Montague, did not exceed 16,000 pounds in three years; and therefore could have little weight in the two houſes, eſpecially when oppoſed to the influence of the crown. Accordingly we find, in all Barillon's diſpatches, a great anxiety that the parliament ſhould never be aſſembled. The conduct of theſe Engliſh patriots was more mean than criminal; and monſieur Courten ſays, that two hundred thouſand livres employed by the Spaniards and Germans, would have more influence than two millions diſtributed by France. See ſir J. Dalrymple's App. p. 111. It is amuſing to obſerve the general, and I may ſay national, rage excited by the late diſcovery of this ſecret negotiation; chiefly on account of Algernon Sydney, whom the blind prejudices of party had exalted into a hero. His ingratitude and breach of faith, in applying for the king's pardon, and immediately on his return entering into cabals for rebellion, form a conduct much more criminal than the taking of French gold: Yet the former circumſtance was always known, and always diſregarded. But every thing connected with France is ſuppoſed, in England, to be polluted beyond all poſſibility of expiation. Even lord Ruſſel, whoſe conduct in this negotiation was only factious, and that in an ordinary degree, is imagined to be diſhonoured by the ſame diſcovery.

peace

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peace were finally concluded; and he recommended to their conſideration, whether he could honourably recal his forces from thoſe towns in Flanders, which were put under his protection, and which had at preſent no other means of defence. The commons agreed to prolong the term with regard to theſe forces. Every thing indeed in Europe bore the appearance of war. France had poſitively declared, that ſhe would not evacuate the ſix towns before the requiſite ceſſion was made to Sweden; and her honour ſeemed now engaged to ſupport that declaration. Spain and the empire, diſguſted with the terms of peace impoſed by Holland, ſaw with pleaſure the proſpect of a powerful ſupport from the new reſolutions of Charles. Holland itſelf, encouraged by the prince of Orange and his party, was not diſpleaſed to find that the war would be renewed on more equal terms. The allied army under that prince was approaching towards Mons, then blockaded by France. A conſiderable body of Engliſh, under the duke of Monmouth, was ready to join him.

CHARLES uſually paſſed a great part of his time in the women's apartments, particularly thoſe of the ducheſs of Portſmouth; where, among other gay company, he often met with Barillon, the French ambaſſador, a man of polite converſation, who was admitted into all the amuſements of that inglorious but agreeable monarch. It was the charms of this ſauntering, eaſy life, which, during his later years, attached Charles to his miſtreſſes. By the inſinuations of Barillon, and the ducheſs of Portſmouth, an order was, in an unguarded hour, procured, which inſtantly changed the face of affairs in Europe. One Du Cros, a French fugitive monk, was ſent to Temple, directing him to apply to the Swediſh ambaſſador, and perſuade him not to inſiſt on the conditions required by France, but to ſacrifice

to

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to general peace thoſe intereſts of Sweden. Du Cros, who had ſecretly received inſtructions from Barillon, publiſhed every where in Holland the commiſſion with which he was intruſted; and all men took the alarm. It was concluded, that Charles's ſudden alacrity for war was as ſuddenly extinguiſhed, and that no ſteady meaſures could ever be taken with England. The king afterwards, when he ſaw Temple, treated this important matter in raillery; and ſaid, laughing, that the rogue Du Cros had outwitted them all.

THE negotiations, however, at Nimeguen ſtill continued; and the French ambaſſadors ſpun out the time, till the morning of the critical day, which, by the late treaty between England and Holland, was to determine whether a ſudden peace or a long war were to have place in Chriſtendom. The French ambaſſadors came then to Van Beverning, and told him, that they had received orders to conſent to the evacuation of the towns, and immediately to conclude and ſign the peace. Van Beverning might have refuſed compliance, becauſe it was now impoſſible to procure the conſent and concurrence of Spain; but he had entertained ſo juſt an idea of the fluctuations in the Engliſh counſels, and was ſo much alarmed by the late commiſſion given to Du Cros, that he deemed it fortunate for the republic to finiſh on any terms a dangerous war, where they were likely to be very ill ſupported. The papers were inſtantly drawn, and ſigned by the miniſters of France and Holland, between eleven and twelve o'clock at night. By this treaty France ſecured the poſſeſſion of Franchecomté, together with Cambray, Aire, St. Omer's, Valenciennes, Tournay, Ypres, Bouchaine, Caſſel, &c. and reſtored to Spain only Charleroi, Coutrai, Oudenard, Aeth, Ghent, and Limbourg. Auguſt 1.

NEXT day Temple received an expreſs from England, which brought the ratifications of the treaty lately

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lately concluded with the States, together with orders immediately to proceed to the exchange of them. Charles was now returned to his former inclinations for war with France.

VAN BEVERNING was loudly exclaimed againſt by the ambaſſadors of the allies at Nimeguen, eſpecially thoſe of Brandenburg and Denmark, whoſe maſters were obliged, by the treaty, to reſtore all their acquiſitions. The miniſters of Spain and the emperor were ſullen and diſguſted; and all men hoped that the States, importuned and encouraged by continual ſolicitations from England, would diſavow their ambaſſador, and renew the war. The prince of Orange even took an extraordinary ſtep, in order to engage them to that meaſure; or perhaps to give vent to his own ſpleen and reſentment. The day after ſigning the peace at Nimeguen, he attacked the French army at St. Dennis near Mons; and gained ſome advantage over Luxembourg, who reſted ſecure on the faith of the treaty, and concluded the war to be finiſhed. The prince knew, at leaſt had reaſon to believe, that the peace was ſigned, though it had not been formally notified to him; and he here ſacrificed wantonly, without a proper motive, the lives of many brave men on both ſides, who fell in this ſharp and well-conteſted action.

HYDE was ſent over with a view of perſuading the States to diſavow Van Beverning; and the king promiſed that England, if ſhe might depend on Holland, would immediately declare war, and would purſue it, till France were reduced to reaſonable conditions. Charles at preſent went farther than words. He hurried on the embarkation of his army for Flanders; and all his preparations wore a hoſtile appearance. But the States had been too often deceived to truſt him any longer. They ratified the treaty ſigned at Nimeguen; and all the other powers of Europe were at laſt, after much clamour and many

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many diſguſts, obliged to accept of the terms preſcribed to them.

1678. Peace of Nimeguen.

Lewis had now reached the height of that glory which ambition can afford. His miniſters and negotiators appeared as much ſuperior to thoſe of all Europe in the cabinet, as his generals and armies had been experienced in the field. A ſucceſsful war had been carried on againſt an alliance, compoſed of the greateſt potentates in Europe. Conſiderable conqueſts had been made, and his territories enlarged on every ſide. An advantageous peace was at laſt concluded, where he had given the law. The allies were ſo enraged againſt each other, that they were not likely to cement ſoon in any new confederacy. And thus he had, during ſome years, a real proſpect of attaining the monarchy of Europe, and of exceeding the empire of Charlemagne, perhaps equalling that of ancient Rome. Had England continued much longer in the ſame condition, and under the ſame government, it is not eaſy to conceive that he could have failed of his purpoſe.

In proportion as theſe circumſtances exalted the French, they excited indignation among the Engliſh, whoſe animoſity, rouſed by terror, mounted to a great height againſt that rival nation. Inſtead of taking the lead in the affairs of Europe, Charles, they thought, had, contrary to his own honour and intereſt, acted a part entirely ſubſervient to the common enemy; and in all his meaſures had either no project at all, or ſuch as was highly criminal and dangerous. While Spain, Holland, the emperor, the princes of Germany, called aloud on England to lead them to victory and to liberty, and conſpired to raiſe her to a ſtation more glorious than ſhe had ever before attained; her king, from mean pecuniary motives, had ſecretly ſold his alliance to Lewis, and was bribed into an intereſt contrary to that of his people. His active ſchemes, in conjunction with France, were highly pernicious; his neutra-

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neutrality was equally ignominious; and the jealous, refractory behaviour of the parliament, though in itſelf dangerous, was the only remedy for ſo many greater ills, with which the public, from the miſguided counſels of the king, was ſo nearly threatened. Such were the diſpoſitions of men's minds at the concluſion of the peace of Nimeguen: And theſe diſpoſitions naturally prepared the way for the events which followed.

State of affairs in Scotland.

We muſt now return to the affairs of Scotland, which we left in ſome diſorder, after the ſuppreſſion of the inſurrection in 1666. The king, who at that time endeavoured to render himſelf popular in England, adopted like meaſures in Scotland; and he entruſted the government into the hands chiefly of Tweddale, and ſir Robert Murray, men of prudence and moderation. Theſe miniſters made it their principal object to compoſe the religious differences, which ran high, and for which ſcarcely any modern nation but the Dutch, had as yet found the proper remedy. As rigour and reſtraint had failed of ſucceſs in Scotland, a ſcheme of *comprehenſion* was tried; by which it was intended to diminiſh greatly the authority of biſhops, to aboliſh their negative voice in the eccleſiaſtical courts, and to leave them little more than the right of precedency among the preſbyters. But the preſbyterian zealots entertained great jealouſy againſt this ſcheme. They remembered that, by ſuch gradual ſteps, king James had endeavoured to introduce epiſcopacy. Should the ears and eyes of men be once reconciled to the name and habit of biſhops, the whole power of the function, they dreaded, would ſoon follow: The leaſt communication with unlawful and antichriſtian inſtitutions they eſteemed dangerous and criminal: *Touch not, taſte not, handle not*; this cry went out amongſt them: And the king's miniſters at laſt perceived that they ſhould proſtitute the dignity of government, by making advances,

to

to which the malcontents were determined not to correſpond. CHAP. LXVI.

THE next project adopted was that of *indulgence*. In proſecution of this ſcheme, the moſt popular of the expelled preachers, without requiring any terms of ſubmiſſion to the eſtabliſhed religion, were ſettled in vacant churches; and ſmall ſalaries of about twenty pounds a-year were offered to the reſt, till they ſhould otherwiſe be provided for. Theſe laſt refuſed the king's bounty, which they conſidered as the wages of a criminal ſilence. Even the former ſoon repented their compliance. The people, who had been accuſtomed to hear them rail againſt their ſuperiors, and preach to the times, as they termed it, deemed their ſermons languid and ſpiritleſs, when deprived of theſe ornaments. Their uſual gifts, they thought, had left them, on account of their ſubmiſſion, which was ſtigmatiſed as eraſtianiſm. They gave them the appellation, not of miniſters of Chriſt, but of *the king's curates*; as the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church were commonly denominated *the biſhop's curates*. The preachers themſelves returned in a little time to their former practices, by which they hoped to regain their former dominion over the minds of men. The conventicles multiplied daily in the weſt: The clergy of the eſtabliſhed church were inſulted: The laws were neglected: The covenanters even met daily in arms at their places of worſhip: And though they uſually diſperſed themſelves after divine ſervice, yet the government took a juſt alarm at ſeeing men, who were ſo entirely governed by their ſeditious teachers, dare to ſet authority at defiance, and, during a time of full peace, to put themſelves in a military poſture. 1678.

THERE was here, it is apparent, in the political body, a diſeaſe dangerous and inveterate; and the government had tried every remedy, but the true one, to allay and correct it. An unlimited *toleration*, after ſects have diffuſed themſelves, and are

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ſtrongly rooted, is the only expedient which can allay their fervour, and make the civil union acquire a ſuperiority above religious diſtinctions. But as the operations of this regimen are commonly gradual, and at firſt imperceptible, vulgar politicians are apt, for that reaſon, to have recourſe to more haſty and more dangerous remedies. It is obſervable too, that theſe non-conformiſts in Scotland neither offered nor demanded toleration; but laid claim to an entire ſuperiority, and to the exerciſe of extreme rigour againſt their adverſaries. The covenant, which they idolized, was a perſecuting, as well as a ſeditious band of confederacy; and the government, inſtead of treating them like madmen, who ſhould be ſoothed, and flattered, and deceived into tranquillity, thought themſelves entitled to a rigid obedience, and were too apt, from a miſtaken policy, to retaliate upon the diſſenters, who had erred from the ſpirit of enthuſiaſm.

AMIDST theſe diſturbances, a new parliament was aſſembled at Edinburgh[h]; and Lauderdale was ſent down commiſſioner. The zealous preſbyterians, who were the chief patrons of liberty, were too obnoxious to reſiſt, with any ſucceſs, the meaſures of government; and in parliament the tide ſtill ran ſtrongly in favour of monarchy. The commiſſioner had ſuch influence as to get two acts paſſed, which were of great conſequence to the eccleſiaſtical and civil liberties of the kingdom. By the one, it was declared, that the ſettling of all things with regard to the external government of the church was a right of the crown: That whatever related to eccleſiaſtical meetings, matters, and perſons, was to be ordered according to ſuch directions as the king ſhould ſend to his privy council: And that theſe, being publiſhed by them, ſhould have the force of laws. The other act regarded the

[h] 19th of October 1669.

militia,

militia, which the king, by his own authority, had two years before eſtabliſhed, inſtead of the army, which was diſbanded. By this act the militia was ſettled, to the number of 22,000 men, who were to be conſtantly armed and regularly diſciplined. And it was farther enacted, that theſe troops ſhould be held in readineſs to march into England, Ireland, or any part of the king's dominions, for any cauſe in which his majeſty's authority, power, or greatneſs, was concerned; on receiving orders, not from the king himſelf, but from the privy council of Scotland. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

LAUDERDALE boaſted extremely of his ſervices in procuring theſe two laws. The king by the former was rendered abſolute maſter of the church, and might legally, by his edict, re-eſtabliſh, if he thought proper, the catholic religion in Scotland. By the latter, he ſaw a powerful force ready at his call: He had even the advantage of being able to diſguiſe his orders under the name of the privy council; and in caſe of failure in his enterpriſes, could, by ſuch a pretence, apologize for his conduct to the parliament of England. But in proportion as theſe laws were agreeable to the king, they gave alarm to the Engliſh commons, and were the chief cauſe of the redoubled attacks which they made upon Lauderdale. Theſe attacks, however, ſerved only to fortify him in his intereſt with the king; and though it is probable that the militia of Scotland, during the divided ſtate of that kingdom, would, if matters had come to extremities, have been of little ſervice againſt England; yet did Charles regard the credit of it as a conſiderable ſupport to his authority: And Lauderdale, by degrees, became the prime, or rather ſole, miniſter for Scotland. The natural indolence of the king diſpoſed him to place entire confidence in a man who had ſo far extended the royal prerogative, and who was ſtill diſpoſed to render it abſolutely uncontrollable.

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In a ſubſequent ſeſſion of the ſame parliament[1], a ſevere law was enacted againſt conventicles. Ruinous fines were impoſed both on the preachers and hearers, even if the meetings had been in houſes; but field conventicles were ſubjected to the penalty of death, and confiſcation of goods: Four hundred marks Scotch were offered as a reward to thoſe who ſhould ſeize the criminals; and they were indemnified for any ſlaughter which they might commit in the execution of ſuch an undertaking. And as it was found difficult to get evidence againſt theſe conventicles, however numerous, it was enacted by another law, that whoever, being required by the council, refuſed to give information upon oath, ſhould be puniſhed by arbitrary fines, by impriſonment, or by baniſhment to the plantations. Thus all perſecution naturally, or rather neceſſarily, adopts the iniquities, as well as rigours, of the inquiſition. What a conſiderable part of the ſociety conſider as their duty and honour, and even many of the oppoſite party are apt to regard with compaſſion and indulgence, can by no other expedient be ſubjected to ſuch ſevere penalties as the natural ſentiments of mankind appropriate only to the greateſt crimes.

Though Lauderdale found this ready compliance in the parliament, a party was formed againſt him, of which duke Hamilton was the head. This nobleman, with Tweddale and others, went to London, and applied to the king, who, during the preſent depreſſion and inſignificance of parliament, was alone able to correct the abuſes of Lauderdale's adminiſtration. But even their complaints to him might be dangerous; and all approaches of truth to the throne were barred by the ridiculous law againſt leaſing-making; a law which ſeems to have been extorted by the ancient nobles, in order to protect their own tyranny, oppreſſion, and injuſtice.

[1] 28th of July 1670.

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Great precautions, therefore, were uſed by the Scottiſh malcontents in their repreſentations to the king; but no redreſs was obtained. Charles loaded them with careſſes, and continued Lauderdale in his authority.

A VERY bad, at leaſt a ſevere uſe was made of this authority. The privy council diſpoſſeſſed twelve gentlemen or noblemen of their houſes[k]; which were converted into ſo many garriſons, eſtabliſhed for the ſuppreſſion of conventicles. The nation, it was pretended, was really, on account of theſe religious aſſemblies, in a ſtate of war; and by the ancient law, the king, in ſuch an emergence, was empowered to place a garriſon in any houſe where he ſhould judge it expedient.

IT were endleſs to recount every act of violence and arbitrary authority exerciſed during Lauderdale's adminiſtration. All the lawyers were put from the bar, nay baniſhed, by the king's order, twelve miles from the capital, and by that means the whole juſtice of the kingdom was ſuſpended for a year; till theſe lawyers were brought to declare it as their opinion, that all appeals to parliament were illegal. A letter was procured from the king, for expelling twelve of the chief magiſtrates of Edinburgh, and declaring them incapable of all public office; though their only crime had been their want of compliance with Lauderdale. The boroughs of Scotland have a privilege of meeting once a-year by their deputies, in order to conſider the ſtate of trade, and make bye-laws for its regulation: In this convention a petition was voted, complaining of ſome late acts, which obſtructed commerce, and praying the king that he would empower his commiſſioner, in the next ſeſſion of parliament, to give his aſſent for repealing them. For this preſumption, as it was called, ſeveral of the members were fined and impriſoned.

[k] In 1675.

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One More, a member of parliament, having moved in the houſe, that, in imitation of the Engliſh parliament, no bill ſhould paſs except after three readings, he was, for this pretended offence, immediately ſent to priſon by the commiſſioner.

The private deportment of Lauderdale was as inſolent and provoking as his public adminiſtration was violent and tyrannical. Juſtice likewiſe was univerſally perverted by faction and intereſt: And from the great rapacity of that duke, and ſtill more of his ducheſs, all offices and favours were openly put to ſale. No one was allowed to approach the throne who was not dependent on him; and no remedy could be hoped for or obtained againſt his manifold oppreſſions. The caſe of Mitchel ſhows that this miniſter was as much deſtitute of truth and honour, as of lenity and juſtice.

Mitchel was a deſperate fanatic, and had entertained a reſolution of aſſaſſinating Sharpe, archbiſhop of St. Andrews, who, by his former apoſtaſy and ſubſequent rigour, had rendered himſelf extremely odious to the covenanters. In the year 1668, Mitchel fired a piſtol at the primate, as he was ſitting in his coach; but the biſhop of Orkney, ſtepping into the coach, happened to ſtretch out his arm, which intercepted the ball, and was much ſhattered by it. This happened in the principal ſtreet of the city; but ſo generally was the archbiſhop hated, that the aſſaſſin was allowed peaceably to walk off; and having turned a ſtreet or two, and thrown off a wig, which diſguiſed him, he immediately appeared in public, and remained altogether unſuſpected. Some years after, Sharpe remarked one, who ſeemed to eye him very eagerly; and being ſtill anxious leſt an attempt of aſſaſſination ſhould be renewed, he ordered the man to be ſeized and examined. Two loaded piſtols were found upon him; and as he was now concluded to be the author of the former attempt, Sharpe promiſed, that, if he would confeſs

ſeſs his guilt, he ſhould be diſmiſſed without any puniſhment. Mitchel (for the conjecture was juſt) was ſo credulous as to believe him; but was immediately produced before the council by the faithleſs primate. The council, having no proof againſt him, but hoping to involve the whole body of covenanters in this odious crime, ſolemnly renewed the promiſe of pardon, if he would make a full diſcovery; and it was a great diſappointment to them, when they found, upon his confeſſion, that only one perſon, who was now dead, had been acquainted with his bloody purpoſe. Mitchel was then carried before a court of judicature, and required to renew his confeſſion; but being apprehenſive leſt, though a pardon for life had been promiſed him, other corporal puniſhment might ſtill be inflicted, he refuſed compliance, and was ſent back to priſon. He was next examined before the council, under pretence of his being concerned in the inſurrection at Pentland; and though no proof appeared againſt him, he was put to the queſtion, and, contrary to the moſt obvious principles of equity, was urged to accuſe himſelf. He endured the torture with ſingular reſolution, and continued obſtinate in the denial of a crime, of which, it is believed, he really was not guilty. Inſtead of obtaining his liberty, he was ſent to the Baſs, a very high rock, ſurrounded by the ſea; at this time converted into a ſtate priſon, and full of the unhappy covenanters. He there remained in great miſery, loaded with irons, till the year 1677, when it was reſolved by ſome new examples to ſtrike a freſh terror into the perſecuted, but ſtill obſtinate enthuſiaſts. Mitchel was then brought before a court of judicature, and put upon his trial, for an attempt to aſſaſſinate an archbiſhop and a privy-counſellor. His former confeſſion was pleaded againſt him, and was proved by the teſtimony of the duke of Lauderdale, lord commiſſioner,

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lord Hatton his brother, the earl of Rothes, and the primate himſelf. Mitchel, beſides maintaining that the privy-council was no court of judicature, and that a confeſſion before them was not judicial, aſſerted, that he had been engaged to make that confeſſion by a ſolemn promiſe of pardon. The four privy-counſellors denied upon oath that any ſuch promiſe had ever been given. The priſoner then deſired that the council-books might be produced in court; and even offered a copy of that day's proceedings to be read; but the privy-counſellors maintained, that, after they had made oath, no farther proof could be admitted; and that the books of council contained the king's ſecrets, which were on no account to be divulged. They were not probably aware, when they ſwore, that the clerk, having engroſſed the promiſe of pardon in the narrative of Mitchel's confeſſion, the whole minute had been ſigned by the chancellor, and that the proofs of their perjury were by that means committed to record. Though the priſoner was condemned, Lauderdale was ſtill inclined to pardon him; put the unrelenting primate rigorouſly inſiſted upon his execution; and ſaid, that if aſſaſſins remained unpuniſhed, his life muſt be expoſed to perpetual danger. Mitchel was accordingly executed at Edinburgh in January 1678. Such a complication of cruelty and treachery ſhews the character of thoſe miniſters to whom the king had, at this time, entruſted the government of Scotland.

LAUDERDALE'S adminiſtration, beſides the iniquities ariſing from the violence of his temper, and the ſtill greater iniquities inſeparable from all projects of perſecution, was attended with other circumſtances, which engaged him in ſevere and arbitrary meaſures. An abſolute government was to be introduced, which on its commencement is often moſt rigorous;

rigorous; and tyranny was ſtill obliged, for want of military power, to cover itſelf under an appearance of law; a ſituation which rendered it extremely awkward in its motions, and, by provoking oppoſition, extended the violence of its oppreſſions.

THE rigours exerciſed againſt conventicles, inſtead of breaking the ſpirit of the fanatics, had tended only, as is uſual, to render them more obſtinate, to increaſe the fervour of their zeal, to link them more cloſely together, and to inflame them againſt the eſtabliſhed hierarchy. The commonalty, almoſt every where in the ſouth, particularly in the weſtern counties, frequented conventicles without reſerve; and the gentry, though they themſelves commonly abſtained from theſe illegal places of worſhip, connived at this irregularity in their inferiors. In order to intereſt the former on the ſide of the perſecutors, a bond or contract was, by order of the privy council, tendered to the landlords in the weſt, by which they were to engage for the good behaviour of their tenants; and in caſe any tenant frequented a conventicle, the landlord was to ſubject himſelf to the ſame fine as could by law be exacted from the delinquent. It was ridiculous to give ſanction to laws by voluntary contracts: It was iniquitous to make one man anſwerable for the conduct of another: It was illegal to impoſe ſuch hard conditions upon men, who had no-wiſe offended. For theſe reaſons, the greater part of the gentry refuſed to ſign theſe bonds; and Lauderdale, enraged at this oppoſition, endeavoured to break their ſpirit by expedients which were ſtill more unuſual and more arbitrary.

THE law enacted againſt conventicles, had called them ſeminaries of rebellion. This expreſſion, which was nothing but a flouriſh of rhetoric, Lauderdale and the privy council were willing to underſtand in a literal ſenſe; and becauſe the weſtern counties abounded in conventicles, though otherwiſe in profound peace, they pretended that theſe counties

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counties were in a ſtate of actual war and rebellion. They made therefore an agreement with ſome highland chieftains to call out their clans, to the number of 8000 men: To theſe they joined the guards, and the militia of Angus; And they ſent the whole to live at free quarters upon the lands of ſuch as had refuſed the bonds illegally required of them. The obnoxious counties were the moſt populous and moſt induſtrious in Scotland. The highlanders were the people the moſt diſorderly and the leaſt civilized. It is eaſy to imagine the havoc and deſtruction which enſued. A multitude, not accuſtomed to diſcipline, averſe to the reſtraint of laws, trained up in rapine and violence, were let looſe amidſt thoſe whom they were taught to regard as enemies to their prince and to their religion. Nothing eſcaped their ravenous hands: By menances, by violence, and ſometimes by tortures, men were obliged to diſcover their concealed wealth. Neither age, nor ſex, nor innocence, afforded protection: And the gentry, finding that even thoſe who had been moſt compliant, and who had ſubſcribed the bonds, were equally expoſed to the rapacity of thoſe barbarians, confirmed themſelves ſtill more in the reſolution of refuſing them. The voice of the nation was raiſed againſt this enormous outrage; and after two months free quarter, the highlanders were ſent back to their hills, loaded with the ſpoils and execrations of the weſt.

Those who had been engaged to ſubſcribe the bonds, could find no ſecurity but by turning out ſuch tenants as they ſuſpected of an inclination to conventicles, and thereby depopulating their eſtates. To increaſe the miſery of theſe unhappy farmers, the council enacted, that none ſhould be received any where, or allowed a habitation, who brought not a certificate of his conformity from the pariſh-miniſter. That the obſtinate and refractory might not eſcape farther perſecution, a new device was fallen

fallen upon. By the law of Scotland, any man, who ſhould go before a magiſtrate, and ſwear that he thought himſelf in danger from another, might obtain a writ of *law-burrows*, as it is called; by which the latter was bound, under the penalty of impriſonment and outlawry, to find ſecurity for his good behaviour. Lauderdale entertained the abſurd notion of making the king ſue out writs of law-burrows againſt his ſubjects. On this pretence, the refuſers of the bonds were ſummoned to appear before the council, and were required to bind themſelves, under the penalty of two years' rent, neither to frequent conventicles themſelves, nor allow their family and tenants to be preſent at thoſe unlawful aſſemblies. This chicanery was joined to tyranny; and the majeſty of the king, inſtead of being exalted, was in reality proſtituted; as if he were obliged to ſeek the ſame ſecurity, which one neighbour might require of another.

It was an old law, but ſeldom executed, that a man, who was accuſed of any crime, and did not appear, in order to ſtand his trial, might be *intercommuned*, that is, he might be publicly outlawed; and whoever afterwards, either on account of buſineſs, relation, nay charity, had the leaſt intercourſe with him, was ſubjected to the ſame penalties as could by law be inflicted on the criminal himſelf. Several writs of intercommuning were now iſſued againſt the hearers and preachers in conventicles; and by this ſevere and even abſurd law, crimes and guilt went on multiplying in a geometrical proportion. Where laws themſelves are ſo violent, it is no wonder that an adminiſtration ſhould be tyrannical.

Lest the cry of an oppreſſed people ſhould reach the throne, the council forbad, under ſevere penalties, all noblemen or gentlemen of landed property to leave the kingdom: A ſevere edict, eſpecially where the ſovereign himſelf reſided in a foreign country.

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country. Notwithſtanding this act of council, Caſſils firſt, afterwards Hamilton and Tweddale, went to London, and laid their complaints before the king. Theſe violent proceedings of Lauderdale were oppoſite to the natural temper of Charles; and he immediately iſſued orders for diſcontinuing the bonds and the writs of law-burrows. But as he was commonly little touched with what lay at a diſtance, he entertained not the proper indignation againſt thoſe who had abuſed his authority: Even while he retracted theſe oppreſſive meaſures, he was prevailed with to avow and praiſe them, in a letter which he wrote to the privy council. This proof of confidence might fortify the hands of the miniſtry; but the king ran a manifeſt riſque of loſing the affections of his ſubjects, by not permitting, even thoſe who were deſirous of it, to diſtinguiſh between him and their oppreſſors.

It is reported[1], that Charles, after a full hearing of the debates concerning Scottiſh affairs, ſaid, "I perceive, that Lauderdale has been guilty of "many bad things againſt the people of Scotland; "but I cannot find that he has acted any thing "contrary to my intereſt:" A ſentiment unworthy of a ſovereign!

During the abſence of Hamilton and the other diſcontented lords, the king allowed Lauderdale to ſummon a convention of eſtates at Edinburgh. This aſſembly, beſides granting ſome money, beſtowed applauſe on all Lauderdale's adminiſtration, and in their addreſſes to the king expreſſed the higheſt contentment and ſatisfaction. But theſe inſtances of complaiſance had the contrary effect in England from what was expected by the contrivers of them. All men there concluded, that in Scotland the very voice of liberty was totally ſuppreſſed; and that, by the prevalence of tyranny, grievances were ſo

[1] Burnet.

riveted,

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riveted, that it was become dangerous even to mention them, or complain to the prince, who alone was able to redreſs them. From the ſlavery of the neighbouring kingdom, they inferred the arbitrary diſpoſition of the king; and from the violence with which ſovereign power was there exerciſed, they apprehended the miſeries which might enſue to themſelves upon their loſs of liberty. If perſecution, it was aſked, by a proteſtant church could be carried to ſuch extremes, what might be dreaded from the prevalence of popery, which had ever, in all ages, made open profeſſion of exterminating by fire and ſword every oppoſite ſect or communion? And if the firſt approaches towards unlimited authority were ſo tyrannical, how diſmal its final eſtabliſhment; when all dread of oppoſition ſhould at laſt be removed by mercenary armies, and all ſenſe of ſhame by long and inveterate habit?

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The popiſh plot——Oates's narrative——and character——Coleman's letters——Godfrey's murder——General conſternation——The parliament——Zeal of the parliament——Bedloe's narrative——Accuſation of Danby——His impeachment——Diſſolution of the long parliament——Its character——Trial of Coleman——Of Ireland——New elections——Duke of Monmouth——Duke of York retires to Bruſſels——New parliament——Danby's impeachment——Popiſh plot——New council——Limitations on a popiſh ſucceſſor——Bill of excluſion——Habeas corpus bill——Prorogation and diſſolution of the parliament——Trial and execution of the five jeſuits——And of Langhorne——Wakeman acquitted——State of affairs in Scotland——Battle of Bothwel-bridge.

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THE Engliſh nation, ever ſince the fatal league with France, had entertained violent jealouſies againſt the court; and the ſubſequent meaſures adopted by the king, had tended more to increaſe than cure the general prejudices. Some myſterious deſign was ſtill ſuſpected in every enterpriſe and profeſſion: Arbitrary power and popery were apprehended as the ſcope of all projects: Each breath or rumour made the people ſtart with anxiety: Their enemies, they thought, were in their very boſom, and had gotten poſſeſſion of their ſovereign's confidence. While in this timorous, jealous diſpoſition, the cry of a *plot* all on a ſudden ſtruck their ears:

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ears: They were wakened from their ſlumber; and like men affrightened and in the dark, took every figure for a ſpectre. The terror of each man became the ſource of terror to another. And an univerſal panic being diffuſed, reaſon and argument, and common ſenſe, and common humanity, loſt all influence over them. From this diſpoſition of men's minds we are to account for the progreſs of the POPISH PLOT, and the credit given to it; an event, which would otherwiſe appear prodigious and altogether inexplicable. The Poiſh plot.

ON the 12th of Auguſt, one Kirby, a chemiſt, accoſted the king, as he was walking in the park: "Sir," ſaid he, "keep within the company: Your "enemies have a deſign upon your life; and you "may be ſhot in this very walk." Being aſked the reaſon of theſe ſtrange ſpeeches, he ſaid, that two men, called Grove and Pickering, had engaged to ſhoot the king, and ſir George Wakeman, the queen's phyſician, to poiſon him. This intelligence, he added, had been communicated to him by doctor Tongue; whom, if permitted, he would introduce to his majeſty. Tongue was a divine of the church of England; a man active, reſtleſs, full of projects, void of underſtanding. He brought papers to the king, which contained information of a plot, and were digeſted into forty-three articles. The king, not having leiſure to peruſe them, ſent them to the treaſurer, Danby, and ordered the two informers to lay the buſineſs before that miniſter. Tongue confeſſed to Danby, that he himſelf had not drawn the papers, that they had been ſecretly thruſt under his door, and that, though he ſuſpected, he did not certainly know, who was the author. After a few days he returned, and told the treaſurer, that his ſuſpicions, he found, were juſt; and that the author of the intelligence, whom he had met twice or thrice in the ſtreet, had acknowledged

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ledged the whole matter, and had given him a more particular account of the conſpiracy, but deſired that his name might be concealed, being apprehenſive leſt the papiſts ſhould murder him.

THE information was renewed with regard to Grove's and Pickering's intentions of ſhooting the king; and Tongue even pretended, that, at a particular time, they were to ſet out for Windſor with that intention. Orders were given for arreſting them, as ſoon as they ſhould appear in that place: But though this alarm was more than once renewed, ſome frivolous reaſons were ſtill found by Tongue for their having delayed the journey. And the king concluded, both from theſe evaſions, and from the myſterious, artificial manner of communicating the intelligence, that the whole was an impoſture.

TONGUE came next to the treaſurer, and told him, that a pacquet of letters, written by jeſuits concerned in the plot, was that night to be put into the poſt-houſe for Windſor, directed to Bennifield, a jeſuit, confeſſor to the duke. When this intelligence was conveyed to the king, he replied, that the pacquet mentioned had a few hours before been brought to the duke by Bennifield; who ſaid, that he ſuſpected ſome bad deſign upon him, that the letters ſeemed to contain matters of a dangerous import, and that he knew them not to be the handwriting of the perſons whoſe names were ſubſcribed to them. This incident ſtill further confirmed the king in his incredulity.

THE matter had probably ſleeped for ever, had it not been for the anxiety of the duke; who, hearing that prieſts and jeſuits, and even his own confeſſor, had been accuſed, was deſirous that a thorough inquiry ſhould be made by the council into the pretended conſpiracy. Kirby and Tongue were inquired after, and were now found to be living in cloſe connection with Titus Oates, the perſon who

was

was ſaid to have conveyed the firſt intelligence to Tongue. Oates affirmed, that he had fallen under ſuſpicion with the Jeſuits; that he had received three blows with a ſtick, and a box on the ear from the provincial of that order, for revealing their conſpiracy: And that, over-hearing them ſpeak of their intentions to puniſh him more ſeverely, he had withdrawn, and concealed himſelf. This man, in whoſe breaſt was lodged a ſecret, involving the fate of kings and kingdoms, was allowed to remain in ſuch neceſſity, that Kirby was obliged to ſupply him with daily bread; and it was a joyful ſurpriſe to him, when he heard that the council was at laſt diſpoſed to take ſome notice of his intelligence. But as he expected more encouragement from the public, than from the king or his miniſters, he thought proper, before he was preſented to the council, to go with his two companions to ſir Edmondſbury Godfrey, a noted and active juſtice of peace, and to give evidence before him of all the articles of the conſpiracy.

Oates's narrative.

THE wonderful intelligence, which Oates conveyed both to Godfrey and the council, and afterwards to the parliament, was to this purpoſe[m]. The pope, he ſaid, on examining the matter in the congregation *de propaganda*, had found himſelf entitled to the poſſeſſion of England and Ireland on account of the hereſy of prince and people, and had accordingly aſſumed the ſovereignty of theſe kingdoms. This ſupreme power he had thought proper to delegate to the ſociety of Jeſuits; and de Oliva, general of that order, in conſequence of the papal grant, had exerted every act of regal authority, and particularly had ſupplied, by commiſſions under the ſeal of the ſociety, all the chief offices, both civil and military. Lord Arundel was created chancellor, lord Powis treaſurer, ſir William Godolphin privy

[m] Oates's narrative.

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ſeal, Coleman ſecretary of ſtate, Langhorne attorney general, lord Bellaſis general of the papal army, lord Peters lieutenant general, lord Stafford paymaſter; and inferior commiſſions, ſigned by the provincial of the Jeſuits, were diſtributed all over England. All the dignities too of the church were filled, and many of them with Spaniards and other foreigners. The provincial had held a conſult of the Jeſuits under his authority; where the king, whom they opprobriouſly called the Black Baſtard, was ſolemnly tried and condemned as a heretic; and a reſolution taken to put him to death. Father le Shee (for ſo this great plotter and informer called father la Chaiſe, the noted confeſſor of the French king) had conſigned in London ten thouſand pounds to be paid to any man who ſhould merit it by this aſſaſſination. A Spaniſh provincial had expreſſed like liberality: The prior of the Benedictines was willing to go the length of ſix thouſand: The Dominicans approved of the action; but pleaded poverty. Ten thouſand pounds had been offered to ſir George Wakeman, the queen's phyſician, who demanded fifteen thouſand, as a reward for ſo great a ſervice: His demand was complied with; and five thouſand had been paid him by advance. Leſt this means ſhould fail, four Iriſh ruffians had been hired by the Jeſuits, at the rate of twenty guineas a-piece, to ſtab the king at Windſor; and Coleman, ſecretary to the late ducheſs of York, had given the meſſenger, who carried them orders, a guinea to quicken his diligence. Grove and Pickering were alſo employed to ſhoot the king with ſilver bullets: The former was to receive the ſum of fifteen hundred pounds; the latter, being a pious man, was to be rewarded with thirty thouſand maſſes, which, eſtimating maſſes at a ſhilling a-piece, amounted to a like value. Pickering would have executed his purpoſe, had not the flint at one time dropped out of his piſtol, at another time the priming.

ing. Coniers, the Jeſuit, had bought a knife at the price of ten ſhillings, which he thought was not dear, conſidering the purpoſe for which he intended it, to wit, ſtabbing the king. Letters of ſubſcription were circulated among the catholics all over England to raiſe a ſum for the ſame purpoſe. No leſs than fifty Jeſuits had met in May laſt, at the White-horſe tavern, where it was unanimouſly agreed to put the king to death. This ſynod did afterwards, for more convenience, divide themſelves into many leſſer cabals or companies; and Oates was employed to carry notes and letters from one to another, all tending to the ſame end, of murdering the king. He even carried, from one company to another, a paper, in which they formally expreſſed their reſolution of executing that deed; and it was regularly ſubſcribed by all of them. A wager of a hundred pounds was laid, and ſtakes made, that the king ſhould eat no more Chriſtmas pyes. In ſhort, it was determined, to uſe the expreſſion of a Jeſuit, that if he would not become R. C. (Roman Catholic) he ſhould no longer be C. R. (Charles Rex). The great fire of London had been the work of the Jeſuits, who had employed eighty or eighty-ſix perſons for that purpoſe, and had expended ſeven hundred fire-balls; but they had a good return for their money, for they had been able to pilfer goods from the fire to the amount of fourteen thouſand pounds: The Jeſuits had alſo raiſed another fire on St. Margaret's Hill, whence they had ſtolen goods to the value of two thouſand pounds: Another at Southwark: And it was determined in like manner to burn all the chief cities in England. A paper model was already framed for the firing of London; the ſtations were regularly marked out, where the ſeveral fires were to commence; and the whole plan of operations was ſo concerted, that precautions were taken by the Jeſuits to vary their meaſures, according to the variation of

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the wind. Fire-balls were familiarly called among them Teuxbury muſtard pills; and were ſaid to contain a notable biting ſauce. In the great fire, it had been determined to murder the king; but he had diſplayed ſuch diligence and humanity in extinguiſhing the flames, that even the Jeſuits relented, and ſpared his life. Beſides theſe aſſaſſinations and fires; inſurrections, rebellions, and maſſacres, were projected by that religious order in all the three kingdoms. There were twenty thouſand catholics in London, who would riſe in four-and twenty hours or leſs; and Jenniſon, a Jeſuit, ſaid, that they might eaſily cut the throats of a hundred thouſand proteſtants. Eight thouſand catholics had agreed to take arms in Scotland. Ormond was to be murdered by four Jeſuits; a general maſſacre of the Iriſh proteſtants was concerted; and forty thouſand black bills were already provided for that purpoſe. Coleman had remitted two hundred thouſand pounds to promote the rebellion in Ireland; and the French king was to land a great army in that iſland. Poole, who wrote the Synopſis, was particularly marked out for aſſaſſination; as was alſo Dr. Stillingfleet, a controverſial writer againſt the papiſts. Burnet tells us, that Oates paid him the ſame compliment. After all this havoc, the crown was to be offered to the duke, but on the following conditions; that he receive it as a gift from the pope; that he confirm all the papal commiſſions for offices and employments; that he ratify all paſt tranſactions, by pardoning the incendiaries, and the murderers of his brother and of the people; and that he conſent to the utter extirpation of the proteſtant religion. If he refuſe theſe conditions, he himſelf was immediately to be poiſoned or aſſaſſinated, *To pot James muſt go*; according to the expreſſion aſcribed by Oates to the Jeſuits.

Oates, the informer of this dreadful plot, was himſelf the moſt infamous of mankind. He was the

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the ſon of an anabaptiſt preacher, chaplain to colonel Pride; but having taken orders in the church, he had been ſettled in a ſmall living by the duke of Norfolk. He had been indicted for perjury; and by ſome means had eſcaped. He was afterwards a chaplain on board the fleet; whence he had been diſmiſſed on complaint of ſome unnatural practices, not fit to be named. He then became a convert to the catholics; but he afterwards boaſted, that his converſion was a mere pretence, in order to get into their ſecrets and to betray them [n]. He was ſent over to the Jeſuits' college at St. Omers, and though above thirty years of age, he there lived ſome time among the ſtudents. He was diſpatched on an errand to Spain; and thence returned to St. Omers; where the Jeſuits, heartily tired of their convert, at laſt diſmiſſed him from their ſeminary. It is likely, that, from reſentment of this uſage, as well as from want and indigence, he was induced, in combination with Tongue, to contrive that plot, of which he accuſed the catholics.

THIS abandoned man, when examined before the council, betrayed his impoſtures in ſuch a manner, as would have utterly diſcredited the moſt conſiſtent ſtory, and the moſt reputable evidence. While in Spain, he had been carried, he ſaid, to don John, who promiſed great aſſiſtance to the execution of the catholic deſigns. The king aſked him, what ſort of a man don John was: He anſwered, a tall lean man; directly contrary to truth, as the king well knew [o]. He totally miſtook the ſituation of the Jeſuits' college at Paris [p]. Though he pretended great intimacies with Coleman, he knew him not, when placed very near him; and had no other excuſe than that his ſight was bad in candle-light [q]. He fell into like miſtakes with regard to Wakeman.

[n] Burnet, Echard, North, L'Eſtrange, &c. [o] Burnet, North.
[p] North. [q] Burnet, North, Trials.

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NOTWITHSTANDING theſe objections, great attention was paid to Oates's evidence, and the plot became very ſoon the ſubject of converſation, and even the object of terror to the people. The violent animoſity, which had been excited againſt the catholics in general, made the public ſwallow the groſſeſt abſurdities when they accompanied an accuſation of thoſe religioniſts: And the more diabolical any contrivance appeared, the better it ſuited the tremendous idea entertained of a Jeſuit. Danby likewiſe, who ſtood in oppoſition to the French and catholic intereſt at court, was willing to encourage every ſtory, which might ſerve to diſcredit that party. By his ſuggeſtion, when a warrant was ſigned for arreſting Coleman, there was inſerted a clauſe for ſeizing his papers; a circumſtance attended with the moſt important conſequences.

Coleman's letters.

COLEMAN, partly on his own account, partly by orders from the duke, had been engaged in a correſpondence with father la Chaiſe, with the pope's nuncio at Bruſſels, and with other catholics abroad; and being himſelf a fiery zealot, buſy and ſanguine, the expreſſions in his letters often betrayed great violence and indiſcretion. His correſpondence, during the years 1674, 1675, and part of 1676, was ſeized, and contained many extraordinary paſſages. In particular he ſaid to la Chaiſe, "We have here a "mighty work upon our hands, no leſs than the "converſion of three kingdoms, and by that per- "haps the utter ſubduing of a peſtilent hereſy, "which has a long time domineered over a great "part of this northern world. There were never "ſuch hopes of ſucceſs, ſince the days of queen "Mary, as now in our days. God has given us a "prince," meaning the duke, "who is become "(may I ſay a miracle) zealous of being the author "and inſtrument of ſo glorious a work; but the "oppoſition we are ſure to meet with is alſo like to "be great: So that it imports us to get all the aid

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" and aſſiſtance we can." In another letter he ſaid, " I can ſcarce believe myſelf awake, or the " thing real, when I think of a prince in ſuch an " age as we live in, converted to ſuch a degree of " zeal and piety, as not to regard any thing in the " world in compariſon of God Almighty's glory, " the ſalvation of his own ſoul, and the converſion " of our poor kingdom." In other paſſages the intereſts of the crown of England, thoſe of the French king, and thoſe of the catholic religion, are ſpoken of as inſeparable. The duke is alſo ſaid to have connected his intereſts unalterably with thoſe of Lewis. The king himſelf, he affirms, is always inclined to favour the catholics, when he may do it without hazard. " Money," Coleman adds, " can- " not fail of perſuading the king to any thing. " There is nothing it cannot make him do, were it " ever ſo much to his prejudice. It has ſuch an " abſolute power over him, that he cannot reſiſt it. " Logic, built upon money, has in our court more " powerful charms than any other ſort of argu- " ment." For theſe reaſons, he propoſed to father la Chaiſe, that the French king ſhould remit the ſum of 300,000 pounds, on condition that the parliament be diſſolved; a meaſure to which, he affirmed, the king was, of himſelf, ſufficiently inclined, were it not for his hopes of obtaining money from that aſſembly. The parliament, he ſaid, had already conſtrained the king to make peace with Holland, contrary to the intereſts of the catholic religion, and of his moſt chriſtian majeſty: And if they ſhould meet again, they would ſurely engage him farther, even to the making of war againſt France. It appears alſo from the ſame letters, that the aſſembling of the parliament ſo late as April in the year 1675, had been procured by the intrigues of the catholic and French party, who thereby intended to ſhow the Dutch and their confede-

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rates, that they could expect no assistance from England.

1678. When the contents of these letters were publicly known, they diffused the panic, with which the nation began already to be seized on account of the popish plot. Men reasoned more from their fears and their passions than from the evidence before them. It is certain, that the restless and enterprising spirit of the catholic church, particularly of the Jesuits, merits attention, and is, in some degree, dangerous to every other communion. Such zeal of proselytism actuates that sect, that its missionaries have penetrated into every nation of the globe; and, in one sense, there is a *popish plot* perpetually carrying on against all states, protestant, pagan, and mahometan. It is likewise very probable, that the conversion of the duke, and the favour of the king, had inspired the catholic priests with new hopes of recovering in these islands their lost dominion, and gave fresh vigour to that intemperate zeal by which they are commonly actuated. Their first aim was to obtain a toleration; and such was the evidence, they believed, of their theological tenets, that, could they but procure entire liberty, they must infallibly in time open the eyes of the people. After they had converted considerable numbers, they might be enabled, they hoped, to reinstate themselves in full authority, and entirely to suppress that heresy, with which the kingdom had so long been affected. Though these dangers to the protestant religion were distant, it was justly the object of great concern to find that the heir of the crown was so blinded with bigotry, and so deeply engaged in foreign interests; and that the king himself had been prevailed on, from low interests, to hearken to his dangerous insinuations. Very bad consequences might ensue from such perverse habits and attachments; nor could the nation

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and parliament guard againſt them with too anxious a precaution. But that the Roman pontiff could hope to aſſume the ſovereignty of theſe kingdoms; a project which, even during the darkneſs of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, would have appeared chimerical: That he ſhould delegate this authority to the Jeſuits; that order in the Romiſh church, which was the moſt hated: That a maſſacre could be attempted of the proteſtants, who ſurpaſſed the catholics a hundred fold, and were inveſted with the whole authority of the ſtate: That the king himſelf was to be aſſaſſinated, and even the duke, the only ſupport of their party: Theſe were ſuch abſurdities as no human teſtimony was ſufficient to prove; much leſs the evidence of one man, who was noted for infamy, and who could not keep himſelf every moment from falling into the groſſeſt inconſiſtencies. Did ſuch intelligence deſerve even ſo much attention as to be refuted, it would appear, that Coleman's letters were ſufficient alone to deſtroy all its credit. For how could ſo long a train of correſpondence be carried on, by a man ſo much truſted by the party; and yet no traces of inſurrections, if really intended, of fires, maſſacres, aſſaſſinations, invaſions, be ever diſcovered in any ſingle paſſage of theſe letters? But all ſuch reflections, and many more, equally obvious, were vainly employed againſt that general prepoſſeſſion with which the nation was ſeized. Oates's plot and Coleman's were univerſally confounded together: And the evidence of the latter being unqueſtionable, the belief of the former, aided by the paſſions of hatred and of terror, took poſſeſſion of the whole people.

17th Oct. Godfrey's murder.

THERE was danger, however, leſt time might open the eyes of the public; when the murder of Godfrey completed the general deluſion, and rendered the prejudices of the nation abſolutely incurable. This magiſtrate had been miſſing ſome days; and after much ſearch, and many ſurmiſes, his body

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was found lying in a ditch at Primroſe-hill: The marks of ſtrangling were thought to appear about his neck, and ſome contuſions on his breaſt: His own ſword was ſticking in the body; but as no conſiderable quantity of blood enſued on drawing it, it was concluded, that it had been thruſt in after his death, and that he had not killed himſelf: He had rings on his fingers, and money in his pocket: It was therefore inferred, that he had not fallen into the hands of robbers. Without farther reaſoning, the cry roſe, that he had been aſſaſſinated by the papiſts, on account of his taking Oates's evidence. This clamour was quickly propagated, and met with univerſal belief. The panic ſpread itſelf on every ſide with infinite rapidity; and all men, aſtoniſhed with fear, and animated with rage, ſaw in Godfrey's fate all the horrible deſigns aſcribed to the catholics; and no farther doubt remained of Oates's veracity. The voice of the nation united againſt that hated ſect; and notwithſtanding that the bloody conſpiracy was ſuppoſed to be now detected, men could ſcarcely be perſuaded that their lives were yet in ſafety. Each hour teemed with new rumours and ſurmiſes. Invaſions from abroad, inſurrections at home, even private murders and poiſonings, were apprehended. To deny the reality of the plot was to be an accomplice: To heſitate was criminal: Royaliſt, Republican; Churchman, Sectary; Courtier, Patriot; all parties concurred in the illuſion. The city prepared for its defence, as if the enemy were at its gates: The chains and poſt were put up: And it was a noted ſaying at that time of ſir Thomas Player, the chamberlain, that, were it not for theſe precautions, all the citizens might riſe next morning with their throats cut[r].

General conſternation.

In order to propagate the popular frenzy, ſeveral artifices were employed. The dead body of God-

[r] North, p. 206.

frey

frey was carried into the city, attended by vaſt multitudes. It was publicly expoſed in the ſtreets, and viewed by all ranks of men; and every one, who ſaw it, went away inflamed, as well by the mutual contagion of ſentiments, as by the diſmal ſpectacle itſelf. The funeral pomp was celebrated with great parade. The corpſe was conducted through the chief ſtreets of the city: Seventy-two clergymen marched before: Above a thouſand perſons of diſtinction followed after: And at the funeral-ſermon, two able-bodied divines mounted the pulpit, and ſtood on each ſide of the preacher, leſt, in paying the laſt duties to this unhappy magiſtrate, he ſhould, before the whole people, be murdered by the papiſts[s].

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In this diſpoſition of the nation, reaſon could no more be heard than a whiſper in the midſt of the moſt violent hurricane. Even at preſent, Godfrey's murder can ſcarcely, upon any ſyſtem, be rationally accounted for. That he was aſſaſſinated by the catholics, ſeems utterly improbable. Theſe religioniſts could not be engaged to commit that crime from *policy*, in order to deter other magiſtrates from acting againſt them. Godfrey's fate was no-wiſe capable of producing that effect, unleſs it were publicly known, that the catholics were his murderers; an opinion which, it was eaſy to foreſee, muſt prove the ruin of their party. Beſides, how many magiſtrates, during more than a century, had acted in the moſt violent manner againſt the catholics, without its being ever ſuſpected that any one had been cut off by aſſaſſination? Such jealous times as the preſent were ſurely ill fitted for beginning theſe dangerous experiments. Shall we therefore ſay, that the catholics were puſhed on, not by policy, but by blind *revenge* againſt Godfrey? But Godfrey had given them little or no occaſion of offence in

[s] North, p. 205.

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taking Oates's evidence. His part was merely an act of form, belonging to his office; nor could he, or any man in his ſtation, poſſibly refuſe it. In the reſt of his conduct, he lived on good terms with the catholics, and was far from diſtinguiſhing himſelf by his ſeverity againſt that ſect. It is even certain that he had contracted an intimacy with Coleman, and took care to inform his friend of the danger to which, by reaſon of Oates's evidence, he was at preſent expoſed.

THERE are ſome writers, who, finding it impoſſible to account for Godfrey's murder by the machinations of the catholics, have recourſe to the oppoſite ſuppoſition. They lay hold of that obvious preſumption, that thoſe commit the crime who reap advantage by it; and they affirm that it was Shafteſbury, and the heads of the popular party, who perpetrated that deed, in order to throw the odium of it on the papiſts. If this ſuppoſition be received, it muſt alſo be admitted, that the whole plot was the contrivance of thoſe politicians; and that Oates acted altogether under their direction. But it appears that Oates, dreading probably the oppoſition of powerful enemies, had very anxiouſly acquitted the duke, Danby, Ormond, and all the miniſtry; perſons who were certainly the moſt obnoxious to the popular leaders. Beſides, the whole texture of the plot contains ſuch low abſurdity, that it is impoſſible to have been the invention of any man of ſenſe or education. It is true, the more monſtrous and horrible the conſpiracy, the better was it fitted to terrify, and thence to convince, the populace: But this effect, we may ſafely ſay, no one could beforehand have expected; and a fool was in this caſe more likely to ſucceed than a wiſe man. Had Shafteſbury laid the plan of a popiſh conſpiracy, he had probably rendered it moderate, conſiſtent, credible; and on that very account had never met with the prodi-

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prodigious ſucceſs, with which Oates's tremendous fictions were attended.

We muſt, therefore, be contented to remain for ever ignorant of the actors in Godfrey's murder; and only pronounce in general, that that event, in all likelihood, had no connection, one way or other, with the popiſh plot. Any man, eſpecially ſo active a magiſtrate as Godfrey, might, in ſuch a city as London, have many enemies, of whom his friends and family had no ſuſpicion. He was a melancholy man; and there is ſome reaſon, notwithſtanding the pretended appearances to the contrary, to ſuſpect that he fell by his own hands. The affair was never examined with tranquillity, or even with common ſenſe, during the time; and it is impoſſible for us, at this diſtance, certainty to account for it.

No one doubted but the papiſts had aſſaſſinated Godfrey; but ſtill the particular actors were unknown. A proclamation was iſſued by the king, offering a pardon and a reward of five hundred pounds to any one who ſhould diſcover them. As it was afterwards ſurmiſed, that the terror of a like aſſaſſination would prevent diſcovery, a new proclamation was iſſued, promiſing abſolute protection to any one who ſhould reveal the ſecret. Thus were indemnity, money, and ſecurity offered to the faireſt bidder: And no one needed to fear, during the preſent fury of the people, that his evidence would undergo too ſevere a ſcrutiny.

21ſt Oct. The parliament.

While the nation was in this ferment, the parliament was aſſembled. In his ſpeech the king told them, that, though they had given money for diſbanding the army[t], he had found Flanders ſo expoſed, that he had thought it neceſſary ſtill to keep them on foot, and doubted not but this meaſure would meet with their approbation. He informed

[t] They had granted him 600,000 pounds for diſbanding the army, for reimburſing the charges of his naval armament, and for paying the princeſs of Orange's portion.

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them, that his revenue lay under great anticipations, and at beſt was never equal to the conſtant and neceſſary expence of government; as would appear from the ſtate of it, which he intended to lay before them. He alſo mentioned the plot, formed againſt his life by Jeſuits; but ſaid, that he would forbear delivering any opinion of the matter, leſt he ſhould ſeem to ſay too much or too little; and that he would leave the ſcrutiny of it entirely to the law.

THE king was anxious to keep the queſtion of the popiſh plot from the parliament; where, he ſuſpected, many deſigning people would very much abuſe the preſent credulity of the nation: But Danby, who hated the catholics, and courted popularity, and perhaps hoped that the king, if his life were believed in danger from the Jeſuits, would be more cordially loved by the nation, had entertained oppoſite deſigns; and the very firſt day of the ſeſſion, he opened the matter in the houſe of peers. The king was extremely diſpleaſed with this temerity, and told his miniſter, "Though you "do not believe it, you will find, that you have "given the parliament a handle to ruin yourſelf, as "well as to diſturb all my affairs; and you will "ſurely live to repent it." Danby had afterwards ſufficient reaſon to applaud the ſagacity of his maſter.

Zeal of the parliament.

THE cry of the plot was immediately echoed from one houſe to the other. The authority of parliament gave ſanction to that fury, with which the people were already agitated. An addreſs was voted for a ſolemn faſt: A form of prayer was contrived for that ſolemnity; and becauſe the popiſh plot had been omitted in the firſt draught, it was carefully ordered to be inſerted; leſt omniſcience ſhould want intelligence, to uſe the words of an hiſtorian [u].

[u] North, p. 207.

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In order to continue and propagate the alarm, addreſſes were voted for laying before the houſe ſuch papers as might diſcover the horrible conſpiracy; for the removal of popiſh recuſants from London; for adminiſtering every where the oaths of allegiance and ſupremacy; for denying acceſs at court to all unknown or ſuſpicious perſons; and for appointing the trainbands of London and Weſtminſter to be in readineſs. The lords Powis, Stafford, Arundel, Peters, and Bellaſis, were committed to the Tower, and were ſoon after impeached for high treaſon. And both houſes, after hearing Oates's evidence, voted, "That the lords and commons are of opi-"nion, that there hath been, and ſtill is, a damn-"able and helliſh plot, contrived and carried on by "the popiſh recuſants, for aſſaſſinating the king, "for ſubverting the government, and for rooting "out and deſtroying the proteſtant religion."

So vehement were the houſes, that they ſat every day, forenoon and afternoon, on the ſubject of the plot: For no other buſineſs could be attended to. A committee of lords was appointed to examine priſoners and witneſſes: Blank warrants were put into their hands, for the commitment of ſuch as ſhould be accuſed or ſuſpected. Oates, who, though his evidence were true, muſt, by his own account, be regarded as an infamous villain, was by every one applauded, careſſed, and called the ſaviour of the nation. He was recommended by the parliament to the king. He was lodged in Whitehall, protected by guards, and encouraged by a penſion of 1200 pounds a-year.

Bedloe's narrative.

It was not long before ſuch bountiful encouragement brought forth new witneſſes. William Bedloe, a man, if poſſible, more infamous than Oates, appeared next upon the ſtage. He was of very low birth, had been noted for ſeveral cheats and even theſts, had travelled over many parts of Europe under

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under borrowed names, and frequently paſſed himſelf for a man of quality, and had endeavoured, by a variety of lies and contrivances, to prey upon the ignorant and unwary. When he appeared before the council, he gave intelligence of Godfrey's murder only, which, he ſaid, had been perpetrated in Somerſet-houſe, where the queen lived, by papiſts, ſome of them ſervants in her family. He was queſtioned about the plot; but utterly denied all knowledge of it, and alſo aſſerted, that he had no acquaintance with Oates. Next day, when examined before the committee of lords, he bethought himſelf better, and was ready to give an ample account of the plot, which he found ſo anxiouſly inquired into. This narrative he made to tally, as well as he could, with that of Oates, which had been publiſhed: But that he might make himſelf acceptable by new matter, he added ſome other circumſtances, and theſe ſtill more tremendous and extraordinary. He ſaid, that ten thouſand men were to be landed from Flanders in Burlington Bay, and immediately to ſeize Hull: That Jerſey and Guernſey were to be ſurpriſed by forces from Breſt; and that a French fleet was, all laſt ſummer, hovering in the Channel for that purpoſe: That the lords Powis and Peters were to form an army in Radnorſhire, to be joined by another army, conſiſting of twenty or thirty thouſand religious men and pilgrims, who were to land at Milford Haven from St. Iago in Spain: That there were forty thouſand men ready in London; beſides thoſe, who would, on the alarm, be poſted at every alehouſe door, in order to kill the ſoldiers, as they came out of their quarters: That lord Stafford, Coleman, and father Ireland, had money ſufficient to defray the expences of all theſe armaments: That he himſelf was to receive four thouſand pounds, as one that could murder a man; as alſo a commiſſion from lord Bellaſis,

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Bellaſis, and a benediction from the pope: That the king was to be aſſaſſinated; all the proteſtants maſſacred, who would not ſeriouſly be converted; the government offered to ONE, if he would conſent to hold it of the church, but if he ſhould refuſe that condition, as was ſuſpected, the ſupreme authority would be given to certain lords under the nomination of the pope. In a ſubſequent examination before the commons, Bedloe added (for theſe men always brought out their intelligence ſucceſſively and by piece-meal), that lord Carrington was alſo in the conſpiracy for raiſing men and money againſt the government; as was likewiſe lord Brudenel. Theſe noblemen, with all the other perſons mentioned by Bedloe, were immediately committed to cuſtody by the parliament.

IT is remarkable that the only reſource of Spain, in her preſent decayed condition, lay in the aſſiſtance of England; and, ſo far from being in a ſituation to tranſport ten thouſand men for the invaſion of that kingdom, ſhe had ſolicited and obtained Engliſh forces to be ſent into the garriſons of Flanders, which were not otherwiſe able to defend themſelves againſt the French. The French too, we may obſerve, were at that very time in open war with Spain, and yet are ſuppoſed to be engaged in the ſame deſign againſt England; as if religious motives were become the ſole actuating principle among ſovereigns. But none of theſe circumſtances, however obvious, were able, when ſet in oppoſition to multiplied horrors, antipathies, and prejudices, to engage the leaſt attention of the populace: For ſuch the whole nation were at this time become. The popiſh plot paſſed for inconteſtable: And had not men ſoon expected with certainty the legal puniſhment of theſe criminals, the catholics had been expoſed to the hazard of an univerſal maſſacre. The torrent indeed of national prejudices ran ſo high, that no one, without the moſt immi-

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nent danger, durſt venture openly to oppoſe it; nay, ſcarcely any one, without great force of judgment, could even ſecretly entertain an opinion contrary to the prevailing ſentiments. The loud and unanimous voice of a great nation has mighty authority over weak minds; and even later hiſtorians are ſo ſwayed by the concurring judgment of ſuch multitudes, that ſome of them have eſteemed themſelves ſufficiently moderate, when they affirmed that many circumſtances of the plot were true, though ſome were added, and others much magnified. But it is an obvious principle, that a witneſs, who perjures himſelf in one circumſtance, is credible in none: And the authority of the plot, even to the end of the proſecutions, ſtood entirely upon witneſſes. Though the catholics had been ſuddenly and unexpectedly detected, at the very moment when their conſpiracy, it is ſaid, was ripe for execution; no arms, no ammunition, no money, no commiſſions, no papers, no letters, after the moſt rigorous ſearch, ever were diſcovered, to confirm the evidence of Oates and Bedloe. Yet ſtill the nation, though often fruſtrated, went on in the eager purſuit and confident belief of the conſpiracy: And even the manifold inconſiſtencies and abſurdities, contained in the narratives, inſtead of diſcouraging them, ſerved only as farther incentives to diſcover the bottom of the plot, and were conſidered as ſlight objections, which a more complete information would fully remove. In all hiſtory, it will be difficult to find ſuch another inſtance of popular frenzy and bigoted deluſion.

In order to ſupport the panic among the people, eſpecially among the citizens of London, a pamphlet was publiſhed with this title, "A narrative "and impartial diſcovery of the horrid popiſh plot, "carried on for burning and deſtroying the cities "of London and Weſtminſter with their ſuburbs; "ſetting forth the ſeveral conſults, orders, and "reſolutions

" reſolutions of the Jeſuits, concerning the ſame: " By captain William Bedloe, lately engaged in " that horrid deſign, and one of the popiſh com- " mittee for carrying on ſuch fires." Every fire, which had happened for ſeveral years paſt, is there aſcribed to the machinations of the Jeſuits, who purpoſed, as Bedloe ſaid, by ſuch attempts, to find an opportunity for the general maſſacre of the proteſtants; and in the mean time, were well pleaſed to enrich themſelves by pilfering goods from the fire.

THE king, though he ſcrupled not, wherever he could ſpeak freely, to throw the higheſt ridicule on the plot, and on all who believed it; yet found it neceſſary to adopt the popular opinion before the parliament. The torrent, he ſaw, ran too ſtrong to be controlled; and he could only hope, by a ſeeming compliance, to be able, after ſome time, to guide and direct and elude its fury. He made therefore a ſpeech to both houſes; in which he told them, that he would take the utmoſt care of his perſon during theſe times of danger; that he was as ready as their hearts could wiſh, to join with them in all means for eſtabliſhing the proteſtant religion, not only during his own time, but for all future ages; and that, provided the right of ſucceſſion were preſerved, he would conſent to any laws for reſtraining a popiſh ſucceſſor: And in concluſion, he exhorted them to think of effectual means for the conviction of popiſh recuſants; and he highly praiſed the duty and loyalty of all his ſubjects, who had diſcovered ſuch anxious concern for his ſafety.

THESE gracious expreſſions abated nothing of the vehemence of parliamentary proceedings. A bill was introduced for a new teſt, in which popery was denominated idolatry; and all members, who refuſed this teſt, were excluded from both houſes. The bill paſſed the commons without much oppo-

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ſition; but in the upper houſe the duke moved, that an exception might be admitted in his favour. With great earneſtneſs, and even with tears in his eyes, he told them, that he was now to caſt himſelf on their kindneſs, in the greateſt concern which he could have in the world; and he proteſted, that whatever his religion might be, it ſhould only be a private *thing* between God and his own ſoul, and never ſhould appear in his public conduct. Notwithſtanding this ſtrong effort, in ſo important a point, he prevailed only by two voices; a ſufficient indication of the general diſpoſition of the people. "I would not have," ſaid a noble peer, in the debate on this bill, "ſo much as a popiſh man or a "popiſh woman to remain here; not ſo much as a "popiſh dog or a popiſh bitch; not ſo much as a "popiſh cat to pur or mew about the king." What is more extraordinary, this ſpeech met with praiſe and approbation.

ENCOURAGED by this general fury, the witneſſes went ſtill a ſtep farther in their accuſations; and though both Oates and Bedloe had often declared, that there was no other perſon of diſtinction, whom they knew to be concerned in the plot, they were now ſo audacious as to accuſe the queen herſelf of entering into the deſign againſt the life of her huſband. The commons, in an addreſs to the king, gave countenance to this ſcandalous accuſation; but the lords would not be prevailed with to join in the addreſs. It is here, if any where, that we may ſuſpect the ſuggeſtions of the popular leaders to have had place. The king, it was well known, bore no great affection to his conſort; and now, more than ever, when his brother and heir was ſo much hated, had reaſon to be deſirous of iſſue, which might quiet the jealous fears of his people. This very hatred, which prevailed againſt the duke, would much facilitate, he knew, any expedient that could be deviſed for the excluſion of that prince; and

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and nothing farther ſeemed requiſite for the king, than to give way in this particular to the rage and fury of the nation. But Charles, notwithſtanding all allurements of pleaſure, or intereſt, or ſafety, had the generoſity to protect his injured conſort. "They think," ſaid he, "I have a mind to a new "wife; but for all that, I will not ſee an innocent "woman abuſed[w]." He immediately ordered Oates to be ſtrictly confined, ſeized his papers, and diſmiſſed his ſervants; and this daring informer was obliged to make applications to parliament, in order to recover his liberty.

DURING this agitation of men's minds, the parliament gave new attention to the militia; a circumſtance which, even during times of greateſt tranquillity, can never prudently be neglected. They paſſed a bill, by which it was enacted, that a regular militia ſhould be kept in arms, during ſix weeks of the year, and a third part of them do duty every fortnight of that time. The popular leaders probably intended to make uſe of the general prejudices, and even to turn the arms of the people againſt the prince[x]. But Charles refuſed his aſſent to the bill, and told the parliament, that he would not, were it for half an hour, part ſo far with the power of the ſword: But if they would contrive any other bill for ordering the militia, and ſtill leave it in his power to aſſemble or diſmiſs them as he thought proper, he would willingly give it the royal aſſent. The commons, diſſatisfied with this negative, though the king had never before employed that prerogative, immediately voted that all the new-levied forces ſhould be diſbanded. They paſſed a bill, granting money for that purpoſe; but to ſhew their extreme jealouſy of the crown, beſides appropriating the money by the ſtricteſt clauſes, they ordered it to be paid not into the exchequer, but into

[w] North's Examen, p. 186. [x] Burnet, vol. i. p. 437.

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the chamber of London. The lords demurred with regard to ſo extraordinary a clauſe, which threw a violent reflection on the king's miniſters, and even on himſelf; and by that means the act remained in ſuſpenſe.

Accuſation of Danby.

It was no wonder, that the preſent ferment and credulity of the nation engaged men of infamous character and indigent circumſtances to become informers; when perſons of rank and condition could be tempted to give into that ſcandalous practice. Montague, the king's ambaſſador at Paris, had procured a ſeat in the lower houſe; and without obtaining or aſking the king's leave, he ſuddenly came over to England. Charles, ſuſpecting his intention, ordered his papers to be ſeized; but Montague, who foreſaw this meaſure, had taken care to ſecrete one paper, which he immediately laid before the houſe of commons. It was a letter from the treaſurer Danby written in the beginning of the year, during the negotiations at Nimeguen for the general peace. Montague was there directed to make a demand of money from France; or in other words, the king was willing ſecretly to ſell his good offices to Lewis, contrary to the general intereſts of the confederates, and even to thoſe of his own kingdoms. The letter, among other particulars, contains theſe words: "In caſe the conditions of peace ſhall be accepted, "the king expects to have ſix millions of livres a-"year for three years, from the time that this "agreement ſhall be ſigned between his majeſty "and the king of France; becauſe it will probably "be two or three years before the parliament will "be in humour to give him any ſupplies after the "making of any peace with France; and the am-"baſſador here has always agreed to that ſum; but "not for ſo long a time." Danby was ſo unwilling to engage in this negotiation, that the king, to ſatisfy him, ſubjoined with his own hand theſe words:

"This

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"This letter is writ by my order, C. R." Montague, who revealed this ſecret correſpondence, had even the baſeneſs to ſell his baſe treachery at a high price to the French monarch[a].

THE commons were inflamed with this intelligence againſt Danby; and carrying their ſuſpicions farther than the truth, they concluded, that the king had all along acted in concert with the French court; and that every ſtep, which he had taken in conjunction with the allies, had been illuſory and deceitful. Deſirous of getting to the bottom of ſo important a ſecret, and being puſhed by Danby's numerous enemies, they immediately voted an impeachment of high treaſon againſt that miniſter, and ſent up ſix articles to the houſe of peers. Theſe articles were, That he had treacherouſly engroſſed to himſelf regal power, by giving inſtructions to his majeſty's ambaſſadors, without the participation of the ſecretaries of ſtate, or the privy-council: That he had traiterouſly endeavoured to ſubvert the government, and introduce arbitrary power; and to that end, had levied and continued an army, contrary to act of parliament: That he had traiterouſly endeavoured to alienate the affections of his majeſty's ſubjects, by negotiating a diſadvantageous peace with France, and procuring money for that purpoſe: That he was popiſhly affected, and had traiterouſly concealed, after he had notice, the late horrid and bloody plot, contrived by the papiſts againſt his majeſty's perſon and government: That he had waſted the king's treaſure; and that he had, by indirect means, obtained ſeveral exorbitant grants from the crown. His impeachment.

IT is certain that the treaſurer, in giving inſtructions to an ambaſſador, had exceeded the bounds of his office; and as the genius of a monarchy, ſtrictly limited, requires that the proper miniſter ſhould be anſwerable for every abuſe of power, the commons, though they here advanced a new pretenſion, might

[a] Appendix to Sir John Dalrymple's Memoirs.

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juſtify themſelves by the utility, and even neceſſity of it. But in other reſpects their charge againſt Danby was very ill grounded. That miniſter made it appear to the houſe of lords, not only that Montague, the informer againſt him, had all along promoted the money-negotiations with France, but that he himſelf was ever extremely averſe to the intereſts of that crown, which he eſteemed pernicious to his maſter and to his country. The French nation, he ſaid, had always entertained, as he was certainly informed, the higheſt contempt, both of the king's perſon and government. His diligence, he added, in tracing and diſcovering the popiſh plot, was generally known; and if he had common ſenſe, not to ſay common honeſty, he would ſurely be anxious to preſerve the life of a maſter, by whom he was ſo much favoured. He had waſted no treaſure, becauſe there was no treaſure to waſte. And though he had reaſon to be grateful for the king's bounty, he had made more moderate acquiſitions than were generally imagined, and than others in his office had often done, even during a ſhorter adminiſtration.

THE houſe of peers plainly ſaw, that, allowing all the charge of the commons to be true, Danby's crime fell not under the ſtatute of Edward III.; and though the words, *treaſon* and *traiterouſly*, had been carefully inſerted in ſeveral articles, this appellation could not change the nature of things, or ſubject him to the penalties annexed to that crime. They refuſed, therefore, to commit Danby upon this irregular charge: The commons inſiſted on their demand; and a great conteſt was likely to ariſe, when the king, who had already ſeen ſufficient inſtances of the ill-humour of the parliament, thought proper to prorogue them. This prorogation was ſoon after followed by a diſſolution; a deſperate remedy in the preſent diſpoſition of the nation. But the diſeaſe, it muſt be owned, the king had reaſon to eſteem deſperate. The utmoſt rage had been diſcovered by the commons, on account of the popiſh plot;

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plot; and their fury began already to point againſt the royal family, if not againſt the throne itſelf. The duke had been ſtruck at in ſeveral motions: The treaſurer had been impeached: All ſupply had been refuſed, except on the moſt diſagreeable conditions: Fears, jealouſies, and antipathies were every day multiplying in parliament: And though the people were ſtrongly infected with the ſame prejudices, the king hoped, that, by diſſolving the preſent cabals, a ſet of men might be choſen more moderate in their purſuits, and leſs tainted with the virulence of faction.

Its character.

THUS came to a period a parliament, which had ſitten during the whole courſe of this reign, one year excepted. Its concluſion was very different from its commencement. Being elected during the joy and feſtivity of the reſtoration, it conſiſted almoſt entirely of royaliſts; who were diſpoſed to ſupport the crown by all the liberality which the habits of that age would permit. Alarmed by the alliance with France, they gradually withdrew their confidence from the king; and finding him ſtill to perſevere in a foreign intereſt, they proceeded to diſcover ſymptoms of the moſt refractory and moſt jealous diſpoſition. The popiſh plot puſhed them beyond all bounds of moderation; and before their diſſolution, they ſeemed to be treading faſt in the footſteps of the laſt long parliament, on whoſe conduct they threw at firſt ſuch violent blame. In all their variations, they had ſtill followed the opinions and prejudices of the nation; and ever ſeemed to be more governed by humour and party-views than by public intereſt, and more by public intereſt than by any corrupt or private influence.

DURING the ſitting of the parliament, and after its prorogation and diſſolution, the trials of the pretended criminals were carried on; and the courts of judicature, places which, if poſſible, ought to be kept more pure from injuſtice than even national aſſemblies

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aſſemblies themſelves, were ſtrongly infected with the ſame party-rage and bigoted prejudices. Coleman, the moſt obnoxious of the conſpirators, was firſt brought to his trial. His letters were produced againſt him. They contained, as he himſelf confeſſed, much indiſcretion: But unleſs ſo far as it is illegal to be a zealous catholic, they ſeemed to prove nothing criminal, much leſs treaſonable, againſt him. Oates and Bedloe depoſed, that he had received a commiſſion, ſigned by the ſuperior of the Jeſuits, to be papal ſecretary of ſtate, and had conſented to the poiſoning, ſhooting, and ſtabbing of the king: He had even, according to Oates's depoſition, advanced a guinea to promote thoſe bloody purpoſes. Theſe wild ſtories were confounded with the projects contained in his letters; and Coleman received ſentence of death. The ſentence was ſoon after executed upon him[y]. He ſuffered with calmneſs and conſtancy, and to the laſt perſiſted in the ſtrongeſt proteſtations of his innocence.

Of Ireland.

COLEMAN's execution was ſucceeded by the trial of father Ireland, who, it is pretended, had ſigned, together with fifty Jeſuits, the great reſolution of murdering the king. Grove and Pickering, who had undertaken to ſhoot him, were tried at the ſame time. The only witneſſes againſt the priſoners were ſtill Oates and Bedloe. Ireland affirmed, that he was in Staffordſhire all the month of Auguſt laſt, a time when Oates's evidence made him in London. He proved his aſſertion by good evidence, and would have proved it by undoubted, had he not, moſt iniquitouſly, been debarred, while in priſon, from all uſe of pen, ink, and paper, and denied the liberty of ſending for witneſſes. All theſe men, before their arraignment, were condemned in the opinion of the judges, jury, and ſpectators; and to be a Jeſuit, or even a catholic, was of itſelf a ſuffi-

[y] 3d of December.

cient

cient proof of guilt. The chief juſtice [z], in particular, gave ſanction to all the narrow prejudices and bigoted fury of the populace. Inſtead of being counſel for the priſoners, as his office required, he pleaded the cauſe againſt them, brow-beat their witneſſes, and on every occaſion repreſented their guilt as certain and unconverted. He even went ſo far as publicly to affirm, that the papiſts had not the ſame principles which proteſtants have, and therefore were not entitled to that common *credence*, which the principles and practices of the latter call for. And when the jury brought in their verdict againſt the priſoners, he ſaid, "You have done, "gentlemen, like very good ſubjects, and very "good Chriſtians, that is to ſay, like very good "proteſtants: And now much good may their "30,000 maſſes do them:" Alluding to the maſſes by which Pickering was to be rewarded for murdering the king. All theſe unhappy men went to execution, proteſting their innocence; a circumſtance which made no impreſſion on the ſpectators. The opinion, that the Jeſuits allowed of lies and mental reſervations for promoting a good cauſe, was at this time ſo univerſally received, that no credit was given to teſtimony delivered either by that order, or by any of their diſciples. It was forgotten, that all the conſpirators engaged in the gun-powder treaſon, and Garnet, the Jeſuit, among the reſt, had freely on the ſcaffold made confeſſion of their guilt.

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THOUGH Bedloe had given information of Godfrey's murder, he ſtill remained a ſingle evidence againſt the perſons accuſed; and all the allurements of profit and honour had not hitherto tempted any one to confirm the teſtimony of that informer. At laſt, means were found to complete the legal evidence. One Prance, a ſilverſmith, and a catholic, had been accuſed by Bedloe of being an accomplice

[z] Sir William Scroggs.

in

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in the murder; and upon his denial had been thrown into priſon, loaded with heavy irons, and confined to the condemned hole, a place cold, dark, and full of naſtineſs. Such rigours were ſuppoſed to be exerciſed by orders from the ſecret committee of lords, particularly Shafteſbury and Buckingham; who, in examining the priſoners, uſually employed (as is ſaid, and indeed ſufficiently proved) threatenings and promiſes, rigour and indulgence, and every art, under pretence of extorting the truth from them. Prance had not courage to reſiſt, but confeſſed himſelf an accomplice in Godfrey's murder. Being aſked concerning the plot, he alſo thought proper to be acquainted with it, and conveyed ſome intelligence to the council. Among other abſurd circumſtances, he ſaid that one Le Fevre bought a ſecond-hand ſword of him; becauſe he knew not, as he ſaid, what times were at hand: And Prance expreſſing ſome concern for poor tradeſmen, if ſuch times came; Le Fevre replied, that it would be better for tradeſmen, if the catholic religion were reſtored: And particularly, that there would be more church work for ſilverſmiths. All this information with regard to the plot, as well as the murder of Godfrey, Prance ſolemnly retracted, both before the king and the ſecret committee: But being again thrown into priſon, he was induced, by new terrors and new ſufferings, to confirm his firſt information, and was now produced as a ſufficient evidence.

Hill, Green, and Berry were tried for Godfrey's murder; all of them men of low ſtations. Hill was ſervant to a phyſician: The other two belonged to the popiſh chapel at Somerſet-houſe. It is needleſs to run over all the particulars of a long trial: It will be ſufficient to ſay, that Bedloe's evidence and Prance's were in many circumſtances totally irreconcilable; that both of them laboured under unſur-

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unſurmountable difficulties, not to ſay groſs abſurdities; and that they were invalidated by contrary evidence, which is altogether convincing. But all was in vain: The priſoners were condemned and executed. They all denied their guilt at their execution; and as Berry died a proteſtant, this circumſtance was regarded as very conſiderable: But, inſtead of its giving ſome check to the general credulity of the people, men were only ſurpriſed, that a proteſtant could be induced at his death to perſiſt in ſo manifeſt a falſehood.

As the army could neither be kept up, nor diſbanded, without money, the king, how little hopes ſoever he could entertain of more compliance, found himſelf obliged to ſummon a new parliament. The blood, already ſhed on account of the popiſh plot, inſtead of ſatiating the people, ſerved only as an incentive to their fury; and each conviction of a criminal was hitherto regarded as a new proof of thoſe horrible deſigns imputed to the papiſts. This election is perhaps the firſt in England, which, ſince the commencement of the monarchy, had been carried on by a violent conteſt between the parties, and where the court intereſted itſelf, to a high degree, in the choice of the national repreſentatives. But all its efforts were fruitleſs, in oppoſition to the torrent of prejudices which prevailed. Religion, liberty, property, even the lives of men were now ſuppoſed to be at ſtake; and no ſecurity, it was thought, except in a vigilant parliament, could be found againſt the impious and bloody conſpirators. Were there any part of the nation, to which the ferment, occaſioned by the popiſh plot, had not as yet propagated itſelf; the new elections, by intereſting the whole people in public concerns, tended to diffuſe it into the remoteſt corner; and the conſternation, univerſally excited, proved an excellent engine for influencing the electors. All the zealots of the former parliament were re-choſen: New ones

New elections.

were

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were added: The preſbyterians, in particular, being tranſported with the moſt inveterate antipathy againſt popery, were very active and very ſucceſsful in the elections. That party, it is ſaid, firſt began at this time the abuſe of ſplitting their freeholds, in order to multiply votes and electors. By accounts, which came from every part of England, it was concluded, that the new repreſentatives would, if poſſible, exceed the old in their refractory oppoſition to the court, and furious perſecution of the catholics.

THE king was alarmed, when he ſaw ſo dreadful a tempeſt ariſe from ſuch ſmall and unaccountable beginnings. His life, if Oates and Bedloe's information were true, had been aimed at by the catholics: Even the duke's was in danger: The higher, therefore, the rage mounted againſt popery, the more ſhould the nation have been reconciled to theſe princes, in whom, it appeared, the church of Rome repoſed no confidence. But there is a ſophiſtry, which attends all the paſſions; eſpecially thoſe into which the populace enter. Men gave credit to the informers, ſo far as concerned the guilt of the catholics: But they ſtill retained their old ſuſpicions, that theſe religioniſts were ſecretly favoured by the king, and had obtained the moſt entire aſcendant over his brother. Charles had too much penetration not to ſee the danger, to which the ſucceſſion, and even his own crown and dignity, now ſtood expoſed. A numerous party, he found, was formed againſt him; on the one hand, compoſed of a populace, ſo credulous from prejudice, ſo blinded with religious antipathy, as implicitly to believe the moſt palpable abſurdities; and conducted, on the other hand, by leaders ſo little ſcrupulous, as to endeavour, by encouraging perjury, ſubornation, lies, impoſtures, and even by ſhedding innocent blood, to gratify their own furious ambition, and ſubvert all legal authority. Rouſed from his lethargy

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by ſo imminent a peril, he began to exert that vigour of mind, of which, on great occaſions, he was not deſtitute; and without quitting in appearance his uſual facility of temper, he collected an induſtry, firmneſs, and vigilance, of which he was believed altogether incapable. Theſe qualities, joined to dexterity and prudence, conducted him happily through the many ſhoals which ſurrounded him; and he was at laſt able to make the ſtorm fall on the heads of thoſe who had blindly raiſed, or artfully conducted it.

One chief ſtep, which the king took, towards gratifying and appeaſing his people and parliament, was, deſiring the duke to withdraw beyond ſea, that no farther ſuſpicion might remain of the influence of popiſh counſels. The duke readily complied; but firſt required an order for that purpoſe, ſigned by the king; leſt his abſenting himſelf ſhould be interpreted as a proof of fear or of guilt. He alſo deſired, that his brother ſhould ſatisfy him, as well as the public, by a declaration of the illegitimacy of the duke of Monmouth.

Duke of Monmouth.

James duke of Monmouth was the king's natural ſon by Lucy Walters, and born about ten years before the reſtoration. He poſſeſſed all the qualities which could engage the affections of the populace; a diſtinguiſhed valour, an affable addreſs, a thoughtleſs generoſity, a graceful perſon. He roſe ſtill higher in the public favour, by reaſon of the univerſal hatred to which the duke, on account of his religion, was expoſed. Monmouth's capacity was mean; his temper pliant: So that, notwithſtanding his great popularity, he had never been dangerous, had he not implicitly reſigned himſelf to the guidance of Shafteſbury, a man of ſuch a reſtleſs temper, ſuch ſubtle wit, and ſuch abandoned principles. That daring politician had flattered Monmouth with the hopes of ſucceeding to the crown. The ſtory of a con-

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a contract of marriage, paſſed between the king and Monmouth's mother, and ſecretly kept in a certain *black box*, had been induſtriouſly ſpread abroad, and was greedily received by the multitude. As the horrors of popery ſtill preſſed harder on them, they might be induced, either to adopt that fiction, as they had already done many others more incredible, or to commit open violation on the right of ſucceſſion. And it would not be difficult, it was hoped, to perſuade the king, who was extremely fond of his ſon, to give him the preference above a brother, who, by his imprudent bigotry, had involved him in ſuch inextricable difficulties. But Charles, in order to cut off all ſuch expectations, as well as to remove the duke's apprehenſions, took care, in full council, to make a declaration of Monmouth's illegitimacy, and to deny all promiſe of marriage with his mother. The duke, being gratified in ſo reaſonable a requeſt, willingly complied with the king's deſire, and retired to Bruſſels.

Duke of York retires to Bruſſels.

March 6. New parliament.

But the king ſoon found, that, notwithſtanding this precaution, notwithſtanding his concurrence in the proſecution of the popiſh plot, notwithſtanding the zeal which he expreſſed, and even at this time exerciſed againſt the catholics; he had nowiſe obtained the confidence of his parliament. The refractory humour of the lower houſe appeared in the firſt ſtep which they took upon their aſſembling. It had ever been uſual for the commons, in the election of their ſpeaker, to conſult the inclinations of their ſovereign; and even the long parliament in 1641 had not thought proper to depart from ſo eſtabliſhed a cuſtom. The king now deſired that the choice ſhould fall on ſir Thomas Meres: But Seymour, ſpeaker to the laſt parliament, was inſtantly called to the chair, by a vote which ſeemed unanimous. The king, when Seymour was preſented to him for his approbation, rejected him, and

ordered the commons to proceed to a new choice. A great flame was excited. The commons maintained, that the king's approbation was merely a matter of form, and that he could not, without giving a reaſon, reject the ſpeaker choſen: The king, that, ſince he had the power of rejecting, he might, if he pleaſed, keep the reaſon in his own breaſt. As the queſtion had never before been ſtarted, it might ſeem difficult to find principles, upon which it could be decided [a]. By way of compromiſe, it was agreed to ſet aſide both candidates. Gregory, a lawyer, was choſen; and the election was ratified by the king. It has ever ſince been underſtood, that the choice of the ſpeaker lies in the houſe; but that the king retains the power of rejecting any perſon diſagreeable to him.

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SEYMOUR was deemed a great enemy to Danby; and it was the influence of that nobleman, as commonly ſuppoſed, which had engaged the king to enter into this ill-timed controverſy with the commons. The impeachment, therefore, of Danby was, on that account, the ſooner revived; and it was maintained by the commons, that, notwithſtanding the intervening diſſolution, every part of that proceeding ſtood in the ſame condition in which it had been left by the laſt parliament: A pretenſion which, though unuſual, ſeems tacitly to have been yielded them. The king had beforehand had the precaution to grant a pardon to Danby; and, in order to ſcreen the chancellor from all attacks by the commons, he had taken the great ſeal into his own hands, and had himſelf affixed it to the parchment. He told the parliament, that, as Danby had acted in every thing by

Danby's impeachment.

[a] In 1566, the ſpeaker ſaid to Q. Elizabeth, that without her allowance the election of the houſe was of no ſignificance. D'Ewes's Journal, p. 97. In the parliament 1592, 1593, the ſpeaker, who was ſir Edward Coke, advances a like poſition. D'Ewes, p. 459. Townſhend, p. 35. So that this pretenſion of the commons ſeems to have been ſomewhat new; like many other powers and privileges.

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his orders, he was in no reſpect criminal; that his pardon, however, he would inſiſt upon; and if it ſhould be found anywiſe defective in form, he would renew it again and again, till it ſhould be rendered entirely complete: But that he was reſolved to deprive him of all employments, and to remove him from court.

THE commons were no-wiſe ſatisfied with this conceſſion. They pretended, that no pardon of the crown could be pleaded in bar of an impeachment by the commons. The prerogative of mercy had hitherto been underſtood to be altogether unlimited in the king; and this pretenſion of the commons, it muſt be confeſſed, was entirely new. It was however not unſuitable to the genius of a monarchy ſtrictly limited; where the king's miniſters are ſuppoſed to be for ever accountable to national aſſemblies, even for ſuch abuſes of power as they may commit by orders from their maſter. The preſent emergence, while the nation was ſo highly inflamed, was the proper time for puſhing ſuch popular claims; and the commons failed not to avail themſelves of this advantage. They ſtill inſiſted on the impeachment of Danby. The peers, in compliance with them, departed from their former ſcruples, and ordered Danby to be taken into cuſtody. Danby abſconded. The commons paſſed a bill, appointing him to ſurrender himſelf before a certain day, or, in default of it, attainting him. A bill had paſſed the upper houſe, mitigating the penalty to baniſhment; but, after ſome conferences, the peers thought proper to yield to the violence of the commons; and the bill of attainder was carried. Rather than undergo ſuch ſevere penalties, Danby appeared, and was immediately committed to the Tower.

WHILE a proteſtant nobleman met with ſuch violent proſecution, it was not likely that the catholics would be overlooked by the zealous commons. The credit of the popiſh plot ſtill ſtood upon the

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oaths of a few infamous witneſſes. Though ſuch immenſe preparations were ſuppoſed to have been made in the very bowels of the kingdom, no traces of them, after the moſt rigorous inquiry, had as yet appeared. Though ſo many thouſands, both abroad and at home, had been engaged in the dreadful ſecret; neither hope, nor fear, nor remorſe, nor levity, nor ſuſpicions, nor private reſentment, had engaged any one to confirm the evidence. Though the catholics, particularly the Jeſuits, were repreſented as guilty of the utmoſt indiſcretion, inſomuch that they talked of the king's murder as common news, and wrote of it in plain terms by the common poſt; yet, among the great number of letters ſeized, no one contained any part of ſo complicated a conſpiracy. Though the informers pretended that, even after they had reſolved to betray the ſecret, many treaſonable commiſſions and papers had paſſed through their hands; they had not had the precaution to keep any one of them, in order to fortify their evidence. But all theſe difficulties, and a thouſand more, were not found too hard of digeſtion by the nation and parliament. The proſecution and farther diſcovery of the plot were ſtill the object of general concern. The commons voted, that, if the king ſhould come to an untimely end, they would revenge his death upon the papiſts; not reflecting that this ſect were not his only enemies. They promiſed rewards to new diſcoverers; not conſidering the danger, which they incurred, of granting bribes to perjury. They made Bedloe a preſent of 500 pounds; and particularly recommended the care of his ſafety to the duke of Monmouth. Colonel Sackville, a member, having, in a private company, ſpoken opprobriouſly of thoſe who affirmed that there was any plot, was expelled the houſe. The peers gave power to their committees to ſend for and examine

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ſuch as would maintain the innocence of thoſe who had been condemned for the plot. A pamphlet having been publiſhed to diſcredit the informers, and to vindicate the catholic lords in the Tower, theſe lords were required to diſcover the author, and thereby to expoſe their own advocate to proſecution. And both houſes concurred in renewing the former vote, that the papiſts had undoubtedly entered into a *horrid* and *treaſonable* conſpiracy againſt the king, the ſtate, and the proteſtant religion.

It muſt be owned that this extreme violence, in proſecution of ſo abſurd an impoſture, diſgraces the noble cauſe of liberty, in which the parliament was engaged. We may even conclude from ſuch impatience of contradiction, that the proſecutors themſelves retained a ſecret ſuſpicion that the general belief was but ill-grounded. The politicians among them were afraid to let in light, leſt it might put an end to ſo uſeful a deluſion: The weaker and leſs diſhoneſt party took care, by turning their eyes aſide, not to ſee a truth, ſo oppoſite to thoſe furious paſſions by which they were actuated, and in which they were determined obſtinately to perſevere.

Sir William Temple had lately been recalled from his foreign employments; and the king, who, after the removal of Danby, had no one with whom he could ſo much as diſcourſe with freedom of public affairs, was reſolved, upon Coventry's diſmiſſion, to make him one of his ſecretaries of ſtate. But that philoſophical patriot, too little intereſted for the intrigues of a court, too full of ſpleen and delicacy for the noiſy turbulence of popular aſſemblies, was alarmed at the univerſal diſcontents and jealouſies which prevailed, and was determined to make his retreat, as ſoon as poſſible, from a ſcene which threatened ſuch confuſion. Meanwhile, he could not refuſe the confidence with which his

maſter honoured him; and he reſolved to employ it to the public ſervice. He repreſented to the king, that, as the jealouſies of the nation were extreme, it was neceſſary to cure them by ſome new remedy, and to reſtore that mutual confidence, ſo requiſite for the ſafety both of king and people: That to refuſe every thing to the parliament in their preſent diſpoſition, or to yield every thing, was equally dangerous to the conſtitution, as well as to public tranquillity: That if the king would introduce into his councils ſuch men as enjoyed the confidence of his people, fewer conceſſions would probably be required; or if unreaſonable demands were made, the king, under the ſanction of ſuch counſellors, might be enabled, with the greater ſafety, to refuſe them: And that the heads of the popular party, being gratified with the king's favour, would probably abate of that violence by which they endeavoured at preſent to pay court to the multitude.

New council.

THE king aſſented to theſe reaſons; and, in concert with Temple, he laid the plan of a new privy-council, without whoſe advice he declared himſelf determined for the future to take no meaſure of importance. This council was to conſiſt of thirty perſons, and was never to exceed that number. Fifteen of the chief officers of the crown were to be continued, who, it was ſuppoſed, would adhere to the king, and, in caſe of any extremity, oppoſe the exorbitancies of faction. The other half of the council was to be compoſed, either of men of character, detached from the court, or of thoſe who poſſeſſed chief credit in both houſes. And the king, in filling up the names of his new council, was well pleaſed to find that the members, in land and offices, poſſeſſed to the amount of 300,000 pounds a-year; a ſum nearly equal to the whole property of the houſe of commons, againſt whoſe

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violence the new council was intended as a barrier to the throne [b].

THIS experiment was tried, and ſeemed at firſt to give ſome ſatisfaction to the public. The earl of Eſſex, a nobleman of the popular party, ſon of that lord Capel who had been beheaded a little after the late king, was created treaſurer in the room of Danby; The earl of Sunderland, a man of intrigue and capacity, was made ſecretary of ſtate: Viſcount Halifax, a fine genius, poſſeſſed of learning, eloquence, induſtry, but ſubject to inquietude, and fond of refinements, was admitted into the council. Theſe three, together with Temple, who often joined them, though he kept himſelf more detached from public buſineſs, formed a kind of cabinet council, from which all affairs received their firſt digeſtion. Shafteſbury was made preſident of the council; contrary to the advice of Temple, who foretold the conſequence of admitting a man of ſo dangerous a character into any part of the public adminiſtration.

As Temple foreſaw, it happened. Shafteſbury, finding that he poſſeſſed no more than the appearance of court-favour, was reſolved ſtill to adhere to the popular party, by whoſe attachment he enjoyed an undiſputed ſuperiority in the lower houſe, and poſſeſſed great influence in the other. The very appearance of court-favour, empty as it was, tended to render him more dangerous. His partiſans, obſerving the progreſs which he had already made,

[b] Their names were: Prince Rupert, the archbiſhop of Canterbury, lord Finch, chancellor, earl of Shafteſbury, preſident, earl of Angleſea, privy-ſeal, duke of Albemarle, duke of Monmouth, duke of Newcaſtle, duke of Lauderdale, duke of Ormond, marquis of Wincheſter, marquis of Worceſter, earl of Arlington, earl of Saliſbury, earl of Bridgwater, earl of Sunderland, earl of Eſſex, earl of Bath, viſcount Fauconberg, viſcount Halifax, biſhop of London, lord Roberts, lord Hollis, lord Ruſſel, lord Cavendiſh, ſecretary Coventry, ſir Francis North, chief juſtice, ſir Henry Capel, ſir John Ernley, ſir Thomas Chicheley, ſir William Temple, Edward Seymour, Henry Powle.

hoped

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hoped that he would ſoon acquire the entire aſcendant; and he conſtantly flattered them, that if they perſiſted in their purpoſe, the king, from indolence, and neceſſity, and fondneſs for Monmouth, would at laſt be induced, even at the expence of his brother's right, to make them every conceſſion.

BESIDES, the antipathy to popery, as well as jealouſy of the king and duke, had taken too faſt poſſeſſion of men's minds, to be removed by ſo feeble a remedy as this new council projected by Temple. The commons, ſoon after the eſtabliſhment of that council, proceeded ſo far as to vote unanimouſly, "That the duke of York's being a "papiſt, and the hopes of his coming to the crown, "had given the higheſt countenance to the preſent "conſpiracies and deſigns of the papiſts againſt the "king and the proteſtant religion." It was expected that a bill for excluding him the throne would ſoon be brought in. To prevent this bold meaſure, the king concerted ſome limitations, which he propoſed to the parliament. He introduced his plan by the following gracious expreſſions: "And "to ſhew you that, while you are doing your "parts, my thoughts have not been miſemployed, "but that it is my conſtant care to do every thing "that may preſerve your religion, and ſecure it for "the future in all events, I have commanded my "lord chancellor to mention ſeveral particulars; "which, I hope, will be an evidence that, in all "things which concern the public ſecurity, I ſhall "not follow your zeal, but lead it."

Limitations on a popiſh ſucceſſor.

THE limitations projected were of the utmoſt importance, and deprived the ſucceſſor of the chief branches of royalty. A method was there chalked out, by which the nation, on every new reign, could be enſured of having a parliament, which the king ſhould not, for a certain time, have it in his power to diſſolve. In caſe of a popiſh ſucceſſor,

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the prince was to forfeit the right of conferring any eccleſiaſtical preferments: No member of the privy council, no judge of the common law or in chancery, was to be put in or diſplaced but by conſent of parliament: And the ſame precaution was extended to the military part of the government; to the lord lieutenants and deputy lieutenants of the counties, and to all officers of the navy. The chancellor of himſelf added, "It is hard to invent "another reſtraint; conſidering how much the "revenue will depend upon the conſent of parlia- "ment, and how impoſſible it is to raiſe money "without ſuch conſent. But yet, if any thing elſe "can occur to the wiſdom of parliament, which "may farther ſecure religion and liberty againſt a "popiſh ſucceſſor, without defeating the right of ſuc- "ceſſion itſelf, his majeſty will readily conſent to it."

It is remarkable that, when theſe limitations were firſt laid before the council, Shafteſbury and Temple were the only members who argued againſt them. The reaſons which they employed were diametrically oppoſite. Shafteſbury's opinion was, that the reſtraints were inſufficient; and that nothing but the total excluſion of the duke could give a proper ſecurity to the kingdom. Temple, on the other hand, thought that the reſtraints were ſo rigorous as even to ſubvert the conſtitution; and that ſhackles, put upon a popiſh ſucceſſor, would not afterwards be eaſily caſt off by a proteſtant. It is certain that the duke was extremely alarmed when he heard of this ſtep taken by the king, and that he was better pleaſed even with the bill of excluſion itſelf, which, he thought, by reaſon of its violence and injuſtice, could never poſſibly be carried into execution. There is alſo reaſon to believe that the king would not have gone ſo far, had he not expected, from the extreme fury of the commons, that his conceſſions would be rejected, and that the blame

of

of not forming a reaſonable accommodation would by that means lie entirely at their door.

It ſoon appeared that Charles had entertained a juſt opinion of the diſpoſitions of the houſe. So much were the commons actuated by the cabals of Shafteſbury and other malcontents; ſuch violent antipathy prevailed againſt popery, that the king's conceſſions, though much more important than could reaſonably have been expected, were not embraced. A bill was brought in for the total excluſion of the duke from the crown of England and Ireland. It was there declared, that the ſovereignty of theſe kingdoms, upon the king's death or reſignation, ſhould devolve to the perſon next in ſucceſſion after the duke; that all acts of royalty which that prince ſhould afterwards perform, ſhould not only be void, but be deemed treaſon; that if he ſo much as entered any of theſe dominions, he ſhould be deemed guilty of the ſame offence; and that all who ſupported his title ſhould be puniſhed as rebels and traitors. This important bill, which implied baniſhment as well as excluſion, paſſed the lower houſe by a majority of ſeventy-nine.

Bill of excluſion.

The commons were not ſo wholly employed about the excluſion-bill as to overlook all other ſecurities to liberty. The country party, during all the laſt parliament, had much exclaimed againſt the bribery and corruption of the members; and the ſame reproach had been renewed againſt the preſent parliament. An inquiry was made into a complaint which was ſo dangerous to the honour of that aſſembly; but very little foundation was found for it. Sir Stephen Fox, who was the pay-maſter, confeſſed to the houſe that nine members received penſions to the amount of three thouſand four hundred pounds: And after a rigorous inquiry by a ſecret committee, eight more penſioners were diſcovered. A ſum alſo, about twelve thouſand pounds, had been occaſion-

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occaſionally given or lent to others. The writers of that age pretend that Clifford and Danby had adopted oppoſite maxims with regard to pecuniary influence. The former endeavoured to gain the leaders and orators of the houſe, and deemed the others of no conſequence. The latter thought it ſufficient to gain a majority, however compoſed. It is likely that the means, rather than the intention, were wanting to both theſe miniſters.

PENSIONS and bribes, though it be difficult entirely to exclude them, are dangerous expedients for government; and cannot be too carefully guarded againſt, nor too vehemently decried, by every one who has a regard to the virtue and liberty of a nation. The influence, however, which the crown acquires from the diſpoſal of places, honours, and preferments, is to be eſteemed of a different nature. This engine of power may become too forcible, but it cannot altogether be aboliſhed, without the total deſtruction of monarchy, and even of all regular authority. But the commons at this time were ſo jealous of the crown, that they brought in a bill, which was twice read, excluding from the lower houſe all who poſſeſſed any lucrative office.

THE ſtanding army and the king's guards were by the commons voted to be illegal: A new pretenſion, it muſt be confeſſed; but neceſſary for the full ſecurity of liberty and a limited conſtitution.

Habeas corpus bill.

ARBITRARY impriſonment is a grievance which, in ſome degree, has place almoſt in every government, except in that of Great Britain; and our abſolute ſecurity from it we owe chiefly to the preſent parliament; a merit which makes ſome atonement for the faction and violence into which their prejudices had, in other particulars, betrayed them. The great charter had laid the foundation of this valuable part of liberty; the petition of right had renewed and extended it; but ſome proviſions were

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ſtill wanting to render it complete, and prevent all evaſion or delay from miniſters and judges. The act of *habeas corpus*, which paſſed this ſeſſion, ſerved theſe purpoſes. By this act it was prohibited to ſend any one to a priſon beyond ſea. No judge, under ſevere penalties, muſt refuſe to any priſoner a writ of *habeas corpus*, by which the gaoler was directed to produce in court the body of the priſoner (whence the writ has its name), and to certify the cauſe of his detainer and impriſonment. If the gaol lie within twenty miles of the judge, the writ muſt be obeyed in three days; and ſo proportionably for greater diſtances: Every priſoner muſt be indicted the firſt term after his commitment, and brought to trial in the ſubſequent term. And no man, after being enlarged by order of court, can be recommitted for the ſame offence. This law ſeems neceſſary for the protection of liberty in a mixed monarchy; and as it has not place in any other form of government, this conſideration alone may induce us to prefer our preſent conſtitution to all others. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that there is ſome difficulty to reconcile with ſuch extreme liberty the full ſecurity and the regular police of a ſtate, eſpecially the police of great cities. It may alſo be doubted whether the low ſtate of the public revenue in this period, and of the military power, did not ſtill render ſome diſcretionary authority in the crown neceſſary to the ſupport of government.

DURING theſe zealous efforts for the protection of liberty, no complaiſance for the crown was diſcovered by this parliament. The king's revenue lay under great debts and anticipations: Thoſe branches granted in the year 1669 and 1670 were ready to expire: And the fleet was repreſented by the king as in great decay and diſorder. But the commons, inſtead of being affected by theſe diſtreſſes of the crown, truſted chiefly to them for paſſing the excluſion-bill, and for puniſhing and diſplacing all the miniſters

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miniſters who were obnoxious to them. They were therefore in no haſte to relieve the king; and grew only the more aſſuming on account of his complaints and uneaſineſs. Jealous, however, of the army, they granted the ſame ſum of 206,000 pounds, which had been voted for diſbanding it by the laſt parliament; though the vote, by reaſon of the ſubſequent prorogation and diſſolution, joined to ſome ſcruples of the lords, had not been carried into an act. This money was appropriated by very ſtrict clauſes; but the commons inſiſted not, as formerly, upon its being paid into the chamber of London.

THE impeachment of the five popiſh lords in the Tower, with that of the earl of Danby, was carried on with vigour. The power of this miniſter, and his credit with the king, rendered him extremely obnoxious to the popular leaders; and the commons hoped that, if he were puſhed to extremity, he would be obliged, in order to juſtify his own conduct, to lay open the whole intrigue of the French alliance, which they ſuſpected to contain a ſecret of the moſt dangerous nature. The king, on his part, apprehenſive of the ſame conſequences, and deſirous to protect his miniſter, who was become criminal merely by obeying orders, employed his whole intereſt to ſupport the validity of that pardon which had been granted him. The lords appointed a day for the examination of the queſtion, and agreed to hear counſel on both ſides: But the commons would not ſubmit their pretenſions to the diſcuſſion of argument and inquiry. They voted, that whoever ſhould preſume, without their leave, to maintain before the houſe of peers the validity of Danby's pardon, ſhould be accounted a betrayer of the liberties of the Engliſh commons. And they made a demand, that the biſhops, whom they knew to be devoted to the court, ſhould be removed, not only when the trial of the earl ſhould commence, but alſo when the validity of his pardon ſhould be diſcuſſed.

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THE biſhops before the reformation had always enjoyed a ſeat in parliament: But ſo far were they anciently from regarding that dignity as a privilege, that they affected rather to form a ſeparate order in the ſtate, independent of the civil magiſtrate, and accountable only to the pope and to their own order. By the conſtitutions, however, of Clarendon, enacted during the reign of Henry II. they were obliged to give their preſence in parliament; but as the canon law prohibited them from aſſiſting in capital trials, they were allowed in ſuch caſes the privilege of abſenting themſelves. A practice, which was at firſt voluntary, became afterwards a rule; and on the earl of Strafford's trial, the biſhops, who would gladly have attended, and who were no longer bound by the canon law, were yet obliged to withdraw. It had been uſual for them to enter a proteſt, aſſerting their right to ſit; and this proteſt, being conſidered as a mere form, was always admitted and diſregarded. But here was ſtarted a new queſtion of no ſmall importance. The commons, who were now enabled, by the violence of the people and the neceſſities of the crown, to make new acquiſitions of powers and privileges, inſiſted that the biſhops had no more title to vote in the queſtion of the earl's pardon than in the impeachment itſelf. The biſhops aſſerted that the pardon was merely a preliminary; and that, neither by the canon law nor the practice of parliament, were they ever obliged, in capital caſes, to withdraw till the very commencement of the trial itſelf. If their abſence was conſidered as a privilege, which was its real origin, it depended on their own choice, how far they would inſiſt upon it. If regarded as a diminution of their right of peerage, ſuch unfavourable cuſtoms ought never to be extended beyond the very circumſtance eſtabliſhed by them; and all arguments, from a pretended parity of reaſon, were in that caſe of little or no authority.

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THE houſe of lords were ſo much influenced by theſe reaſons, that they admitted the biſhops' right to vote, when the validity of the pardon ſhould be examined. The commons inſiſted ſtill on their withdrawing; and thus a quarrel being commenced between the two houſes, the king, who expected nothing but freſh inſtances of violence from this parliament, began to entertain thoughts of laying hold of ſo favourable a pretence, and of finiſhing the ſeſſion by a prorogation. While in this diſpoſition, he was alarmed with ſudden intelligence, that the houſe of commons was preparing a remonſtrance, in order to inflame the nation ſtill farther upon the favourite topics of the plot and of popery. He haſtened, therefore, to execute his intention, even without conſulting his new council, by whoſe advice he had promiſed to regulate his whole conduct. And thus were diſappointed all the projects of the malcontents, who were extremely enraged at this vigorous meaſure of the king's. Shafteſbury publicly threatened that he would have the head of whoever had adviſed it. The parliament was ſoon after diſſolved without advice of council; and writs were iſſued for a new parliament. The king was willing to try every means which gave a proſpect of more compliance in his ſubjects; and, in caſe of failure, the blame, he hoped, would lie on thoſe whoſe obſtinacy forced him to extremities.

27th May.

Prorogation and diſſolution of the parliament, 10th July.

BUT, even during the receſs of parliament, there was no interruption to the proſecution of the catholics accuſed of the plot: The king found himſelf obliged to give way to this popular fury. Whitebread, provincial of the Jeſuits, Fenwic, Gavan, Turner, and Harcourt, all of them of the ſame order, were firſt brought to their trial. Beſides Oates and Bedloe, Dugdale, a new witneſs, appeared againſt the priſoners. This man had been ſteward to lord Aſton, and, though poor, poſſeſſed a character ſomewhat more reputable than the other two:

Trial and execution of the five Jeſuits,

two: But his account of the intended maſſacres and aſſaſſinations was equally monſtrous and incredible. He even aſſerted that 200,000 papiſts in England were ready to take arms. The priſoners proved, by ſixteen witneſſes from St. Omers, ſtudents, and moſt of them young men of family, that Oates was in that ſeminary at the time when he ſwore that he was in London: But as they were catholics, and diſciples of the Jeſuits, their teſtimony, both with the judges and jury, was totally diſregarded. Even the reception which they met with in court was full of outrage and mockery. One of them ſaying that Oates always continued at St. Omers, if he could believe his ſenſes; "You papiſts," ſaid the chief juſtice, "are taught not to believe your ſenſes." It muſt be confeſſed that Oates, in oppoſition to the ſtudents of St. Omers, found means to bring evidence of his having been at that time in London: But this evidence, though it had, at that time, the appearance of ſome ſolidity, was afterwards diſcovered, when Oates himſelf was tried for perjury, to be altogether deceitful. In order farther to diſcredit that witneſs, the Jeſuits proved, by undoubted teſtimony, that he had perjured himſelf in father Ireland's trial, whom they ſhewed to have been in Staffordſhire at the very time when Oates ſwore that he was committing treaſon in London. But all theſe pleas availed them nothing againſt the general prejudices. They received ſentence of death; and were executed, perſiſting to their laſt breath in the moſt ſolemn, earneſt, and deliberate, though diſregarded, proteſtations of their innocence.

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THE next trial was that of Langhorne, an eminent lawyer, by whom all the concerns of the Jeſuits were managed. Oates and Bedloe ſwore, that all the papal commiſſions by which the chief offices in England were filled with catholics, paſſed through his hands. When verdict was given againſt the priſoner,

and of Langhorne.

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priſoner, the ſpectators expreſſed their ſavage joy by loud acclamations. So high indeed had the popular rage mounted, that the witneſſes for this unhappy man, on approaching the court, were almoſt torn in pieces by the rabble: One in particular was bruiſed to ſuch a degree as to put his life in danger: And another, a woman, declared that, unleſs the court could afford her protection, ſhe durſt not give evidence: But as the judges could go no farther than promiſe to puniſh ſuch as ſhould do her any injury, the priſoner himſelf had the humanity to wave her teſtimony.

So far the informers had proceeded with ſucceſs: Their accuſation was hitherto equivalent to a ſentence of death. The firſt check which they received was on the trial of ſir George Wakeman, the queen's phyſician, whom they accuſed of an intention to poiſon the king. It was a ſtrong circumſtance in favour of Wakeman, that Oates, in his firſt information before the council, had accuſed him only upon hearſay; and when aſked by the chancellor, whether he had any thing farther to charge him with? he added, "God forbid I ſhould "ſay any thing againſt ſir George: For I "know nothing more againſt him." On the trial he gave poſitive evidence of the priſoner's guilt. There were many other circumſtances which favoured Wakeman: But what chiefly contributed to his acquittal, was the connexion of his cauſe with that of the queen, whom no one, even during the higheſt prejudices of the times, could ſincerely believe guilty. The great importance of the trial made men recollect themſelves, and recal that good ſenſe and humanity which ſeemed, during ſome time, to have abandoned the nation. The chief juſtice himſelf, who had hitherto favoured the witneſſes, exaggerated the plot, and railed againſt the priſoners, was obſerved to be conſiderably mollified, and to give a favourable charge to the jury.

Wakeman acquitted, 18th July.

Oates

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Oates and Bedloe had the aſſurance to attack him to his face, and even to accuſe him of partiality before the council. The whole party, who had formerly much extolled his conduct, now made him the object of their reſentment. Wakeman's acquittal was indeed a ſenſible mortification to the furious proſecutors of the plot, and fixed an indelible ſtain upon the witneſſes. But Wakeman, after he recovered his liberty, finding himſelf expoſed to ſuch inveterate enmity, and being threatened with farther proſecutions, thought it prudent to retire beyond ſea: And his flight was interpreted as a proof of guilt, by thoſe who were ſtill reſolved to perſiſt in the belief of the conſpiracy.

State of affairs in Scotland.

THE great diſcontents in England, and the refractory diſpoſition of the parliament, drew the attention of the Scottiſh covenanters, and gave them a proſpect of ſome time putting an end to thoſe oppreſſions, under which they had ſo long laboured. It was ſuſpected to have been the policy of Lauderdale and his aſſociates to puſh theſe unhappy men to extremities, and force them into rebellion, with a view of reaping profit from the forfeitures and attainders which would enſue upon it. But the covenanters, aware of this policy, had hitherto forborne all acts of hoſtility; and that tyrannical miniſter had failed of his purpoſe. An incident at laſt happened, which brought on an inſurrection in that country.

THE covenanters were much enraged againſt Sharpe, the primate, whom they conſidered as an apoſtate from their principles, and whom they experienced to be an unrelenting perſecutor of all thoſe who diſſented from the eſtabliſhed worſhip. He had an officer under him, one Carmichael, no leſs zealous than himſelf againſt conventicles, and who by his violent proſecutions had rendered himſelf extremely obnoxious to the fanatics. A company of theſe had waylaid him on the road near St.

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Andrews, with an intention, if not of killing him, at leaſt of chaſtizing him ſo ſeverely as would afterwards render him more cautious in perſecuting the non-conformiſts [c]. While looking out for their prey, they were ſurpriſed at ſeeing the archbiſhop's coach paſs by; and they immediately interpreted this incident as a declaration of the ſecret purpoſe of providence againſt him. But when they obſerved that almoſt all his ſervants, by ſome accident, were abſent, they no longer doubted, but heaven had here delivered their capital enemy into their hands. Without farther deliberation, they fell upon him; dragged him from his coach; tore him from the arms of his daughter, who interpoſed with cries and tears; and piercing him with redoubled wounds, left him dead on the ſpot, and immediately diſperſed themſelves.

THIS atrocious action ſerved the miniſtry as a pretence for a more violent perſecution againſt the fanatics, on whom, without diſtinction, they threw the guilt of thoſe furious aſſaſſins. It is indeed certain, that the murder of Sharpe had excited an univerſal joy among the covenanters, and that their blind zeal had often led them, in their books and ſermons, to praiſe and recommend the aſſaſſination of their enemies, whom they conſidered as the enemies of all true piety and godlineſs. The ſtories of Jael and Siſera, of Ehud and Eglon, reſounded from every pulpit. The officers, quartered in the weſt, received more ſtrict orders to find out and diſperſe all conventicles; and for that reaſon the covenanters, inſtead of meeting in ſmall bodies, were obliged to celebrate their worſhip in numerous aſſemblies, and to bring arms for their ſecurity. At Rutherglen, a ſmall borough near Glaſgow, they openly ſet forth a declaration againſt prelacy; and in the market-place burned ſeveral acts of parlia-

[c] Wodrow's Hiſtory of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 28.

ment

ment and acts of council, which had eſtabliſhed that mode of eccleſiaſtical government, and had prohibited conventicles. For this inſult on the ſupreme authority, they purpoſely choſe the 29th of May, the anniverſary of the reſtoration; and previouſly extinguiſhed the bonfires which had been kindled for that ſolemnity. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

CAPTAIN Graham, afterwards viſcount Dundee, an active and enterpriſing officer, attacked a great conventicle upon Loudon-hill, and was repulſed with the loſs of thirty men. The covenanters, finding that they were unwarily involved in ſuch deep guilt, were engaged to perſevere, and to ſeek, from their valour and fortune alone, for that indemnity, which the ſeverity of the government left them no hopes of ever being able otherwiſe to obtain. They puſhed on to Glaſgow; and though at firſt repulſed, they afterwards made themſelves maſters of that city; diſpoſſeſſed the eſtabliſhed clergy; and iſſued proclamations, in which they declared that they fought againſt the king's ſupremacy, againſt popery and prelacy, and againſt a popiſh ſucceſſor.

How accidental ſoever this inſurrection might appear, there is reaſon to ſuſpect that ſome great men, in combination with the popular leaders in England, had ſecretly inſtigated the covenanters to proceed to ſuch extremities [d], and hoped for the ſame effects that had forty years before enſued from the diſorders in Scotland. The king alſo, apprehenſive of like conſequences, immediately diſpatched thither Monmouth with a ſmall body of Engliſh cavalry. That nobleman joined to theſe troops the Scottiſh guards, and ſome regiments of militia, levied from the well-affected counties; and with great celerity marched in queſt of the rebels. They had taken poſt near Bothwel-caſtle, between Hamilton Battle of Bothwel-bridge.

[d] Algernon Sidney's letters, p. 90.

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1679. and Glaſgow; where there was no acceſs to them but over a bridge, which a ſmall body was able to defend againſt the king's forces. They ſhewed judgment in the choice of their poſt; but diſcovered neither judgment nor valour in any other ſtep of their conduct. No nobility and few gentry had joined them: The clergy were in reality the generals; and the whole army never exceeded 8000 men.

22d June. Monmouth attacked the bridge; and the body of rebels, who defended it, maintained their poſt as long as their ammunition laſted. When they ſent for more, they received orders to quit their ground, and to retire backwards. This imprudent meaſure occaſioned an immediate defeat to the covenanters. Monmouth paſſed the bridge without oppoſition, and drew up his forces oppoſite to the enemy. His cannon alone put them to rout. About 700 fell in the purſuit: For properly ſpeaking there was no action. Twelve hundred were taken priſoners; and were treated by Monmouth with a humanity which they had never experienced in their own countrymen. Such of them as would promiſe to live peaceably were diſmiſſed. About three hundred, who were ſo obſtinate as to refuſe this eaſy condition, were ſhipped for Barbadoes; but unfortunately periſhed in the voyage. Two of their clergy were hanged. Monmouth was of a generous diſpoſition; and beſides, aimed at popularity in Scotland. The king intended to intruſt the government of that kingdom in his hands. He had married a Scottiſh lady, heir of a great family, and allied to all the chief nobility. And Lauderdale, as he was now declining in his parts, and was much decayed in his memory, began to loſe with the king that influence which he had maintained during ſo many years; notwithſtanding the efforts of his numerous enemies both in Scotland and England, and notwithſtanding the many violent and tyrannical actions of which he had been guilty. Even at preſent he retained ſo much influence

ence as to poiſon all the good intentions, which the king, either of himſelf or by Monmouth's ſuggeſtion, had formed with regard to Scotland. An act of indemnity was granted; but Lauderdale took care that it ſhould be ſo worded as rather to afford protection to himſelf and his aſſociates, than to the unhappy covenanters. And though orders were given to connive thenceforwards at all conventicles, he found means, under a variety of pretences, to elude the execution of them. It muſt be owned however, to his praiſe, that he was the chief perſon, who, by his counſel, occaſioned the expeditious march of the forces and the prompt orders given to Monmouth; and thereby diſappointed all the expectations of the Engliſh malcontents, who, reflecting on the diſpoſition of men's minds in both kingdoms, had entertained great hopes from the progreſs of the Scottiſh inſurrection. 1679.

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State of parties——State of the miniſtry——Meal-tub plot——Whig and Tory——A new parliament—— Violence of the commons—— Excluſion bill——Arguments for and againſt the excluſion ——Excluſion bill rejected——Trial of Stafford —— His execution—— Violence of the commons —— Diſſolution of the parliament —— New parliament at Oxford —— Fitzharris's caſe —— Parliament diſſolved —— Victory of the royaliſts.

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THE king, obſerving that the whole nation concurred at firſt in the belief and proſecution of the popiſh plot, had found it neceſſary for his own ſafety to pretend, in all public ſpeeches and tranſactions, an entire belief and acquieſcence in that famous abſurdity, and by this artifice he had eluded the violent and irreſiſtible torrent of the people. When a little time and recollection, as well as the execution of the pretended conſpirators, had ſomewhat moderated the general fury, he was now enabled to form a conſiderable party, devoted to the intereſts of the crown, and determined to oppoſe the pretenſions of the malcontents.

State of parties.

In every mixed government, ſuch as that of England, the bulk of the nation will always incline to preſerve the entire frame of the conſtitution; but according to the various prejudices, intereſts, and diſpoſitions of men, ſome will ever attach themſelves with more paſſion to the regal, others to the popular, part of the government. Though the king, after his reſtoration, had endeavoured to

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aboliſh the diſtinction of parties, and had choſen his miniſters from among all denominations; no ſooner had he loſt his popularity, and expoſed himſelf to general jealouſy, than he found it neceſſary to court the old cavalier party, and to promiſe them full compenſation for that neglect of which they had hitherto complained. The preſent emergence made it ſtill more neceſſary for him to apply for their ſupport; and there were many circumſtances, which determined them, at this time, to fly to the aſſiſtance of the crown, and to the protection of the royal family.

A PARTY, ſtrongly attached to monarchy, will naturally be jealous of the right of ſucceſſion, by which alone they believe ſtability to be preſerved in the government, and a barrier fixed againſt the encroachments of popular aſſemblies. The project, openly embraced, of excluding the duke, appeared to that party a dangerous innovation: And the deſign, ſecretly projected, of advancing Monmouth, made them apprehenſive, leſt the inconveniencies of a diſputed ſucceſſion ſhould be propagated to all poſterity. While the jealous lovers of liberty maintained, that a king, whoſe title depended on the parliament, would naturally be more attentive to the intereſts, at leaſt to the humours, of the people; the paſſionate admirers of monarchy conſidered all dependance as a degradation of kingly government, and a great ſtep towards the eſtabliſhment of a commonwealth in England.

BUT though his union with the political royaliſts brought great acceſſion of force to the king, he derived no leſs ſupport from the confederacy, which he had, at this time, the addreſs to form with the church of England. He repreſented to the eccleſiaſtics the great number of preſbyterians and other ſectaries, who had entered into the popular party; the encouragement and favour which they met with; the loudneſs of their cries with regard to

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popery and arbitrary power. And he made the eſtabliſhed clergy and their adherents apprehend, that the old ſcheme for the abolition of prelacy as well as monarchy was revived, and that the ſame miſeries and oppreſſions awaited them, to which, during the civil wars and uſurpations, they had ſo long been expoſed.

THE memory alſo of thoſe diſmal times united many indifferent and impartial perſons to the crown, and begat a dread leſt the zeal for liberty ſhould engraft itſelf on fanaticiſm, and ſhould once more kindle a civil war in the kingdom. Had not the king ſtill retained the prerogative of diſſolving the parliament, there was indeed reaſon to apprehend the renewal of all the pretenſions and violences which had uſhered in the laſt commotions. The one period appeared an exact counterpart to the other: But ſtill diſcerning judges could perceive, both in the ſpirit of the parties and in the genius of the prince, a material difference; by means of which Charles was enabled at laſt, though with the imminent peril of liberty, to preſerve the peace of the nation.

THE cry againſt popery was loud; but it proceeded leſs from religious than from party zeal, in thoſe who propagated, and even in thoſe who adopted it. The ſpirit of enthuſiaſm had occaſioned ſo much miſchief, and had been ſo ſucceſsfully exploded, that it was not poſſible, by any artifice, again to revive and ſupport it. Cant had been ridiculed; hypocriſy detected; the pretenſions to a more thorough reformation, and to greater purity, had become ſuſpicious; and inſtead of denominating themſelves the *godly* party, the appellation affected at the beginning of the civil wars, the preſent patriots were content with calling themſelves the *good* and the *honeſt* party[e]: A ſure prognoſtic, that their meaſures were not to be ſo furious, nor their pretenſions ſo exorbitant.

[e] Temple, vol. i. p. 335.

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THE king too, though not endowed with the integrity and ſtrict principles of his father, was happy in a more amiable manner, and more popular addreſs. Far from being diſtant, ſtately, or reſerved, he had not a grain of pride or vanity in his whole compoſition[f]; but was the moſt affable, beſt bred man alive. He treated his ſubjects like noblemen, like gentlemen, like freemen; not like vaſſals or boors. His profeſſions were plauſible, his whole behaviour engaging; ſo that he won upon the hearts, even while he loſt the good opinion, of his ſubjects, and often balanced their judgment of things by their perſonal inclination[g]. In his public conduct likewiſe, though he had ſometimes embraced meaſures dangerous to the liberty and religion of his people, he had never been found to perſevere obſtinately in them, but had always returned into that path which their united opinion ſeemed to point out to him. And upon the whole, it appeared to many, cruel and even iniquitous, to remark too rigorouſly the failings of a prince, who diſcovered ſo much facility in correcting his errors, and ſo much lenity in pardoning the offences committed againſt himſelf.

THE general affection borne the king appeared ſignally about this time. He fell ſick at Windſor; and had two or three fits of a fever, ſo violent as made his life be thought in danger. A general conſternation ſeized all ranks of men, increaſed by the apprehenſions entertained of his ſucceſſor. In the preſent diſpoſition of men's minds, the king's death, to uſe an expreſſion of ſir William Temple[h], was regarded as the end of the world. The malcontents, it was feared, would proceed to extremities, and immediately kindle a civil war in the kingdom. Either their entire ſucceſs, or entire

[f] Temple, vol. i. p. 449.
[g] Diſſertation on Parties, letter vii.
[h] Vol. i. p. 342.

failure,

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failure, or even the balance and conteſt of parties, ſeemed all of them events equally fatal. The king's chief counſellors therefore, Eſſex, Halifax, and Sunderland, who ſtood on bad terms with Shafteſbury and the popular party, adviſed him to ſend ſecretly for the duke, that, in caſe of any ſiniſter accident, that prince might be ready to aſſert his right againſt the oppoſition which he was likely to meet with. When the duke arrived, he found his brother out of danger; and it was agreed to conceal the invitation which he had received.

2d Sept. His journey, however, was attended with important conſequences. He prevailed on the king to diſgrace Monmouth, whoſe projects were now known and avowed; to deprive him of his command in the army; and to ſend him beyond ſea. He himſelf returned to Bruſſels; but made a ſhort ſtay in that place. He obtained leave to retire to Scotland, under pretence ſtill of quieting the apprehenſions of the Engliſh nation; but in reality with a view of ſecuring that kingdom in his intereſts.

THOUGH Eſſex and Halifax had concurred in the reſolution of inviting over the duke, they ſoon found, that they had not obtained his confidence, and that even the king, while he made uſe of their ſervice, had no ſincere regard for their perſons. Eſſex in diſguſt reſigned the treaſury: Halifax retired to his country ſeat: Temple, deſpairing of any accommodation among ſuch enraged parties, withdrew almoſt entirely to his books and his gardens. The king, who changed miniſters as well as meaſures with great indifference, beſtowed at this time the chief confidence on Hyde, Sunderland, and Godolphin. Hyde ſucceeded Eſſex in the treaſury.

ALL the king's miniſters, as well as himſelf, were extremely averſe to the meeting of the new parliament, which they expected to find as refractory as any of the preceding. The elections had gone moſtly

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moſtly in favour of the country party. The terrors of the plot had ſtill a mighty influence over the populace; and the apprehenſions of the duke's bigoted principles and arbitrary character weighed with men of ſenſe and reflection. The king therefore reſolved to prorogue the parliament, that he might try, whether time would allay thoſe humours, which, by every other expedient, he had in vain attempted to mollify. In this meaſure he did not expect the concurrence of his council. He knew that thoſe popular leaders, whom he had admitted, would zealouſly oppoſe a reſolution, which diſconcerted all their ſchemes; and that the royaliſts would not dare, by ſupporting it, to expoſe themſelves to the vengeance of the parliament, when it ſhould be aſſembled. Theſe reaſons obliged him to take this ſtep entirely of himſelf; and he only declared his reſolution in council. It is remarkable, that, though the king had made profeſſion never to embrace any meaſure without the advice of theſe counſellors, he had often broken that reſolution, and had been neceſſitated, in affairs of the greateſt conſequence, to control their opinion. Many of them in diſguſt threw up about this time; particularly lord Ruſſel, the moſt popular man in the nation, as well from the mildneſs and integrity of his character, as from his zealous attachment to the religion and liberties of his country. Though carried into ſome exceſſes, his intentions were ever eſteemed upright; and being heir to the greateſt fortune in the kingdom, as well as void of ambition, men believed that nothing but the laſt neceſſity could ever engage him to embrace any deſperate meaſures. Shafteſbury, who was, in moſt particulars, of an oppoſite character, was removed by the king from the office of preſident of the council; and the earl of Radnor, a man who poſſeſſed whimſical talents and ſplenetic virtues, was ſubſtituted in his place.

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It was the favour and countenance of the parliament, which had chiefly encouraged the rumour of plots; but the nation had gotten ſo much into that vein of credulity, and every neceſſitous villain was ſo much incited by the ſucceſs of Oates and Bedloe, that, even during the prorogation, the people were not allowed to remain in tranquillity. There was one Dangerfield, a fellow who had been burned in the hand for crimes, tranſported, whipped, pilloried four times, fined for cheats, out-lawed for felony, convicted of coining, and expoſed to all the public infamy which the laws could inflict on the baſeſt and moſt ſhameful enormities. The credulity of the people, and the humour of the times, enabled even this man to become a perſon of conſequence. He was the author of a new incident, called the *meal-tub plot*, from the place where ſome papers, relating to it, were found. The bottom of this affair it is difficult, and not very material, to diſcover. It only appears, that Dangerfield, under pretence of betraying the conſpiracies of the preſbyterians, had been countenanced by ſome catholics of condition, and had even been admitted to the duke's preſence and the king's: And that, under pretence of revealing new popiſh plots, he had obtained acceſs to Shafteſbury and ſome of the popular leaders. Which ſide he intended to cheat, is uncertain; or whether he did not rather mean to cheat both: But he ſoon found that the belief of the nation was more open to a popiſh than a preſbyterian plot; and he reſolved to ſtrike in with the prevailing humour. Though no weight could be laid on his teſtimony, great clamour was raiſed; as if the court, by way of retaliation, had intended to load the preſbyterians with the guilt of a falſe conſpiracy. It muſt be confeſſed that the preſent period, by the prevalence and ſuſpicion of ſuch mean and ignoble arts on all ſides, throws a great ſtain on the Britiſh annals.

Meal-tub plot.

One

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ONE of the moſt innocent artifices, practiſed by party men at this time, was the additional ceremony, pomp, and expence, with which a pope-burning was celebrated in London: The ſpectacle ſerved to entertain, and amuſe, and inflame, the populace. The duke of Monmouth likewiſe came over without leave, and made a triumphant proceſſion through many parts of the kingdom, extremely careſſed and admired by the people. All theſe arts ſeemed requiſite to ſupport the general prejudices, during the long interval of parliament. Great endeavours were alſo uſed to obtain the king's conſent for the meeting of that aſſembly. Seventeen peers preſented a petition to this purpoſe. Many of the corporations imitated the example. Notwithſtanding ſeveral marks of diſpleaſure, and even a menacing proclamation from the king, petitions came from all parts, earneſtly inſiſting on a ſeſſion of parliament. The danger of popery, and the terrors of the plot, were never forgotten in any of theſe addreſſes.

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TUMULTUOUS petitioning was one of the chief artifices by which the malcontents in the laſt reign had attacked the crown: And though the manner of ſubſcribing and delivering petitions was now ſomewhat regulated by act of parliament, the thing itſelf ſtill remained; and was an admirable expedient for infeſting the court, for ſpreading diſcontent, and for uniting the nation in any popular clamour. As the king found no law, by which he could puniſh thoſe importunate, and, as he deemed them, undutiful ſolicitations, he was obliged to encounter them by popular applications of a contrary tendency. Wherever the church and court party prevailed, addreſſes were framed, containing expreſſions of the higheſt regard to his majeſty, the moſt entire acquieſcence in his wiſdom, the moſt dutiful ſubmiſſion to his prerogative, and the deepeſt *abhorrence* of thoſe who endeavoured to encroach upon it, by pre-

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preſcribing to him any time for aſſembling the parliament. Thus the nation came to be diſtinguiſhed into *petitioners* and *abhorrers*. Factions indeed were at this time extremely animated againſt each other. The very names, by which each party denominated its antagoniſt, diſcover the virulence and rancour which prevailed. For beſides petitioner and abhorrer, appellations which were ſoon forgotten, this year is remarkable for being the epoch of the well-known epithets of WHIG and TORY, by which, and ſometimes without any material difference, this iſland has been ſo long divided. The court party reproached their antagoniſts with their affinity to the fanatical conventiclers in Scotland, who were known by the name of Whigs: The country party found a reſemblance between the courtiers and the popiſh banditti in Ireland, to whom the appellation of Tory was affixed. And after this manner, theſe fooliſh terms of reproach came into public and general uſe; and even at preſent ſeem not nearer their end than when they were firſt invented.

Whig and Tory.

The king uſed every art to encourage his partiſans, and to reconcile the people to his government. He perſevered in the great zeal which he affected againſt popery. He even allowed ſeveral prieſts to be put to death, for no other crime than their having received orders in the Romiſh church. It is ſingular, that one of them, called Evans, was playing at tennis, when the warrant for his immediate execution was notified to him: He ſwore, that he would play out his ſet firſt. Charles, with the ſame view of acquiring popularity, formed an alliance with Spain, and alſo offered an alliance to Holland: But the Dutch, terrified with the great power of France, and ſeeing little reſource in a country ſo diſtracted as England, declined acceptance. He had ſent for the duke from Scotland, but deſired him to return, when the time of aſſembling the parliament began to approach.

It

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It was of great conſequence to the popular party, while the meeting of parliament depended on the king's will, to keep the law, whoſe operations are perpetual, entirely on their ſide. The ſheriffs of London by their office return the juries: It had been uſual for the mayor to nominate one ſheriff by drinking to him; and the common-hall had ever without diſpute confirmed the mayor's choice. Sir Robert Clayton, the mayor, appointed one who was not acceptable to the popular party: The common-hall rejected him; and Bethel and Corniſh, two independents, and republicans, and of conſequence deeply engaged with the malcontents, were choſen by a majority of voices. In ſpite of all remonſtrances and oppoſition, the citizens perſiſted in their choice; and the court party was obliged for the preſent to acquieſce.

Juries however were not ſo partial in the city; but that reaſon and juſtice, even when the popiſh plot was in queſtion, could ſometimes prevail. The earl of Caſtlemaine, huſband to the ducheſs of Cleveland, was acquitted about this time, though accuſed by Oates and Dangerfield of an intention to aſſaſſinate the king. Sir Thomas Gaſcoigne, a very aged gentleman in the north, being accuſed by two ſervants, whom he had diſmiſſed for diſhoneſty, received a like verdict. Theſe trials were great blows to the plot, which now began to ſtagger, in the judgment of moſt men, except thoſe who were entirely devoted to the country party. But in order ſtill to keep alive the zeal againſt popery, the earl of Shafteſbury appeared in Weſtminſter-hall, attended by the earl of Huntingdon, the lords Ruſſel, Cavendiſh, Gray, Brandon, ſir Henry Caverly, ſir Gilbert Gerrard, ſir William Cooper, and other perſons of diſtinction, and preſented to the grand jury of Middleſex reaſons for indicting the duke of York as a popiſh recuſant. While the

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jury

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jury were deliberating on this extraordinary preſentment, the chief juſtice ſent for them, and ſuddenly, even ſomewhat irregularly, diſmiſſed them. Shafteſbury however obtained the end for which he had undertaken this bold meaſure: He ſhowed to all his followers the deſperate reſolution which he had embraced, never to admit of any accommodation or compoſition with the duke. By ſuch daring conduct he gave them aſſurance, that he was fully determined not to deſert their cauſe; and he engaged them to a like devoted perſeverance in all the meaſures which he ſhould ſuggeſt to them.

As the kingdom was regularly and openly divided into two zealous parties, it was not difficult for the king to know, that the majority of the new houſe of commons was engaged in intereſts oppoſite to the court: But that he might leave no expedient untried, which could compoſe the unhappy differences among his ſubjects, he reſolved, at laſt, after a long interval, to aſſemble the parliament. In his ſpeech, he told them that the ſeveral prorogations which he had made, had been very advantageous to his neighbours, and very uſeful to himſelf: That he had employed that interval in perfecting with the crown of Spain an alliance, which had often been deſired by former parliaments, and which, he doubted not, would be extremely agreeable to them: That, in order to give weight to this meaſure, and render it beneficial to Chriſtendom, it was neceſſary to avoid all domeſtic diſſenſions, and to unite themſelves firmly in the ſame views and purpoſes: That he was determined that nothing on his part ſhould be wanting to ſuch a ſalutary end; and provided the ſucceſſion were preſerved in its due and legal courſe, he would concur in any expedient for the ſecurity of the proteſtant religion: That the farther examination of the popiſh plot and the puniſhment of the criminals were requiſite for the

21ſt Octob. A new parliament.

the ſafety both of king and kingdom: And after recommending to them the neceſſity of providing, by ſome ſupplies, for the ſafety of Tangiers, he proceeded in theſe words: "But that which I value "above all the treaſure in the world, and which I "am ſure will give us greater ſtrength and reputa- "tion both at home and abroad than any treaſure "can do, is a perfect union among ourſelves. "Nothing but this can reſtore the kingdom to that "ſtrength and vigour which it ſeems to have loſt, "and raiſe us again to that conſideration which "England hath uſually poſſeſſed. All Europe have "their eyes upon this aſſembly, and think their "own happineſs and miſery, as well as ours, will "depend upon it. If we ſhould be ſo unhappy as "to fall into miſunderſtandings among ourſelves to "that degree as would render our friendſhip unſafe "to truſt to, it will not be wondered at, if our "neighbours ſhould begin to take new reſolutions, "and perhaps ſuch as may be fatal to us. Let us "therefore take care that we do not gratify our "enemies, and diſcourage our friends, by any un- "ſeaſonable diſputes. If any ſuch do happen, the "world will ſee that it is no fault of mine: For I "have done all that it was poſſible for me to do, to "keep you in peace while I live, and to leave you "ſo when I die. But from ſo great prudence and "ſo good affection as yours, I can fear nothing of "this kind; but do rely upon you all, that you "will do your beſt endeavours to bring this parlia- "ment to a good and happy concluſion."

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All theſe mollifying expreſſions had no influence with the commons. Every ſtep which they took betrayed the zeal with which they were animated. They voted that it was the undoubted right of the ſubject to petition the king for the calling and ſitting of parliament. Not content with this deciſion, which ſeems juſtifiable in a mixed monarchy, they

Violence of the commons.

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fell with the utmoſt violence on all thoſe *abhorrers*, who, in their addreſſes to the crown, had expreſſed their diſapprobation of thoſe petitions. They did not reflect that it was as lawful for one party of men as for another, to expreſs their ſenſe of public affairs; and that the beſt eſtabliſhed right may, in particular circumſtances, be abuſed, and even the exerciſe of it become an object of abhorrence. For this offence, they expelled ſir Thomas Withens. They appointed a committee for farther inquiry into ſuch members as had been guilty of a like crime; and complaints were lodged againſt lord Paſton, ſir Robert Malverer, ſir Bryan Stapleton, Taylor, and Turner. They addreſſed the king againſt ſir George Jefferies, recorder of London, for his activity in the ſame cauſe; and they frightened him into a reſignation of his office, in which he was ſucceeded by ſir George Treby, a great leader of the popular party. They voted an impeachment againſt North, chief juſtice of the common pleas, for drawing the proclamation againſt tumultuous petitions: But upon examination found the proclamation ſo cautiouſly worded, that it afforded them no handle againſt him. A petition had been preſented to the king from Taunton. "How dare you deliver me ſuch a paper?" ſaid the king to the perſon who preſented it. "Sir," replied he, "my name is DARE." For this ſaucy reply, but under other pretences, he had been tried, fined, and committed to priſon. The commons now addreſſed the king for his liberty, and for remitting his fine. Some printers alſo and authors of ſeditious libels they took under their protection.

GREAT numbers of the abhorrers, from all parts of England, were ſeized by order of the commons, and committed to cuſtody. The liberty of the ſubject, which had been ſo carefully guarded by the

great

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great charter, and by the late law of habeas corpus, was every day violated by their arbitrary and capricious commitments. The chief jealouſy, it is true, of the Engliſh conſtitution is naturally and juſtly directed againſt the crown; nor indeed have the commons any other means of ſecuring their privileges than by commitments, which, as they cannot beforehand be exactly determined by law, muſt always appear in ſome degree arbitrary. Senſible of theſe reaſons, the people had hitherto, without murmuring, ſeen this diſcretionary power exerciſed by the houſe: But as it was now carried to exceſs, and was abuſed to ſerve the purpoſes of faction, great complaints againſt it were heard from all quarters. At laſt, the vigour and courage of one Stowel of Exeter, an abhorrer, put an end to the practice. He refuſed to obey the ſerjeant at arms, ſtood upon his defence, and ſaid that he knew of no law by which they pretended to commit him. The houſe, finding it equally dangerous to proceed or to recede, got off by an evaſion: They inſerted in their votes, that Stowel was indiſpoſed, and that a month's time was allowed him for the recovery of his health.

But the chief violence of the houſe of commons appeared in all their tranſactions with regard to the plot, which they proſecuted with the ſame zeal and the ſame credulity as their predeceſſors. They renewed the former vote, which affirmed the reality of the horrid popiſh plot; and, in order the more to terrify the people, they even aſſerted that, notwithſtanding the diſcovery, the plot ſtill ſubſiſted. They expelled ſir Robert Can, and ſir Robert Yeomans, who had been complained of, for ſaying that there was no popiſh, but there was a preſbyterian, plot. And they greatly lamented the death of Bedloe, whom they called a material witneſs, and on whoſe teſtimony they much depended. He had been ſeized with a fever at Briſtol; had ſent for

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chief juſtice North; confirmed all his former evidence, except that with regard to the duke and the queen; and deſired North to apply to the king for ſome money to relieve him in his neceſſities. A few days after, he expired; and the whole party triumphed extremely in theſe circumſtances of his death: As if ſuch a teſtimony could be deemed the affirmation of a dying man, as if his confeſſion of perjury in ſome inſtances could aſſure his veracity in the reſt, and as if the perſeverance of one profligate could outweigh the laſt words of ſo many men, guilty of no crime but that of popery.

THE commons even endeavoured, by their countenance and protection, to remove the extreme infamy with which Dangerfield was loaded, and to reſtore him to the capacity of being an evidence. The whole tribe of informers they applauded and rewarded: Jenniſon, Turberville, Dugdale, Smith, la Faria, appeared before them; and their teſtimony, however frivolous or abſurd, met with a favourable reception: The king was applied to in their behalf for penſions and pardons: Their narratives were printed with that ſanction which aroſe from the approbation of the houſe: Dr. Tongue was recommended for the firſt conſiderable church preferment which ſhould become vacant. Conſidering men's determined reſolution to believe, inſtead of admiring that a palpable falſehood ſhould be maintained by witneſſes, it may juſtly appear wonderful, that no better evidence was ever produced againſt the catholics.

THE principal reaſons, which ſtill ſupported the clamour of the popiſh plot, were the apprehenſions entertained by the people of the duke of York, and the reſolution, embraced by their leaders, of excluding him from the throne. Shafteſbury and many conſiderable men of the party, had rendered themſelves irreconcilable with him, and could find their ſafety no way but in his ruin. Monmouth's

Excluſion-bill.

friends hoped that the excluſion of that prince would make way for their patron. The reſentment againſt the duke's apoſtacy, the love of liberty, the zeal for religion, the attachment to faction, all theſe motives incited the country party. And above all, what ſupported the reſolution of adhering to the excluſion, and rejecting all other expedients offered, was the hope artfully encouraged, that the king would at laſt be obliged to yield to their demand. His revenues were extremely burdened; and even if free, could ſcarcely ſuffice for the neceſſary charges of government, much leſs for that pleaſure and expence to which he was inclined. Though he had withdrawn his countenance from Monmouth, he was known ſecretly to retain a great affection for him. On no occaſion had he ever been found to perſiſt obſtinately againſt difficulties and importunity. And as his beloved miſtreſs, the dutcheſs of Portſmouth, had been engaged, either from lucrative views, or the hopes of making the ſucceſſion fall on her own children, to unite herſelf with the popular party; this incident was regarded as a favourable prognoſtic of their ſucceſs. Sunderland, ſecretary of ſtate, who had linked his intereſt with that of the dutcheſs, had concurred in the ſame meaſure.

But beſides friendſhip for his brother and a regard to the right of ſucceſſion, there were many ſtrong reaſons which had determined Charles to perſevere in oppoſing the excluſion. All the royaliſts and the devotees to the church; that party by which alone monarchy was ſupported; regarded the right of ſucceſſion as inviolable; and if abandoned by the king in ſo capital an article, it was to be feared that they would, in their turn, deſert his cauſe, and deliver him over to the pretenſions and uſurpations of the country party. The country party, or the whigs, as they were called, if they did not ſtill retain ſome propenſity towards a republic, were at

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1680. leaſt affected with a violent jealouſy of regal power; and it was equally to be dreaded, that, being enraged with paſt oppoſition, and animated by preſent ſucceſs, they would, if they prevailed in this pretenſion, be willing, as well as able, to reduce the prerogative within very narrow limits. All menaces, therefore, all promiſes were again employed againſt the king's reſolution: He never would be prevailed on to deſert his friends, and put himſelf into the hands of his enemies. And having voluntarily made ſuch important conceſſions, and tendered, over and over again, ſuch ſtrong limitations, he was well pleaſed to find them rejected by the obſtinacy of the commons; and hoped that, after the ſpirit of oppoſition had ſpent itſelf in fruitleſs violence, the time would come, when he might ſafely appeal againſt his parliament to his people.

So much were the popular leaders determined to carry matters to extremities, that in leſs than a week after the commencement of the ſeſſion, a motion was made for bringing in an excluſion-bill, and a committee was appointed for that purpoſe. This bill differed in nothing from the former, but in two articles, which ſhowed ſtill an increaſe of zeal in the commons: The bill was to be read to the people twice a-year in all the churches of the kingdom, and every one who ſhould ſupport the duke's title was rendered incapable of receiving a pardon but by act of parliament.

THE debates were carried on with great violence on both ſides. The bill was defended by ſir William Jones, who had now reſigned his office of attorney-general, by lord Ruſſel, by ſir Francis Winnington, ſir Harry Capel, ſir William Pulteney, by colonel Titus, Treby, Hambden, Mont-

10th Nov. ague. It was oppoſed by ſir Leoline Jenkins, ſecretary of ſtate, ſir John Ernley, chancellor of the exchequer, by Hyde, Seymour, Temple. The argu-

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arguments, tranſmitted to us, may be reduced to the following topics.

In every government, ſaid the excluſioniſts, there is ſomewhere an authority abſolute and ſupreme; nor can any determination, how unuſual ſoever, which receives the ſanction of the legiſlature, admit afterwards of diſpute or control. The liberty of a conſtitution, ſo far from diminiſhing this abſolute power, ſeems rather to add force to it, and to give it greater influence over the people. The more members of the ſtate concur in any legiſlative deciſion, and the more free their voice, the leſs likelihood is there that any oppoſition will be made to thoſe meaſures which receive the final ſanction of their authority. In England, the legiſlative power is lodged in king, lords, and commons, which comprehend every order of the community: And there is no pretext for exempting any circumſtance of government, not even the ſucceſſion of the crown, from ſo full and deciſive a juriſdiction. Even expreſs declarations have, in this particular, been made of parliamentary authority: Inſtances have occurred where it has been exerted: And though prudential reaſons may juſtly be alleged why ſuch innovations ſhould not be attempted but on extraordinary occaſions, the power and right are for ever veſted in the community. But if any occaſion can be deemed extraordinary, if any emergence can require unuſual expedients, it is the preſent; when the heir to the crown has renounced the religion of the ſtate, and has zealouſly embraced a faith totally hoſtile and incompatible. A prince of that communion can never put truſt in a people ſo prejudiced againſt him: The people muſt be equally diffident of ſuch a prince: Foreign and deſtructive alliances will ſeem to one the only protection of his throne: Perpetual jealouſy, oppoſition, faction, even inſurrections, will be employed by the other as

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the ſole ſecurities for their liberty and religion. Though theological principles, when ſet in oppoſition to paſſions, have often ſmall influence on mankind in general, ſtill leſs on princes; yet when they become ſymbols of faction, and marks of party diſtinctions, they concur with one of the ſtrongeſt paſſions in the human frame, and are then capable of carrying men to the greateſt extremities. Notwithſtanding the better judgment and milder diſpoſition of the king; how much has the influence of the duke already diſturbed the tenor of government? How often engaged the nation into meaſures totally deſtructive of their foreign intereſts and honour, of their domeſtic repoſe and tranquillity? The more the abſurdity and incredibility of the popiſh plot are inſiſted on, the ſtronger reaſon it affords for the excluſion of the duke; ſince the univerſal belief of it diſcovers the extreme antipathy of the nation to his religion, and the utter impoſſibility of ever bringing them to acquieſce peaceably under the dominion of ſuch a ſovereign. The prince, finding himſelf in ſo perilous a ſituation, muſt ſeek for ſecurity by deſperate remedies, and by totally ſubduing the privileges of a nation which had betrayed ſuch hoſtile diſpoſitions towards himſelf, and towards every thing which he deems the moſt ſacred. It is in vain to propoſe limitations and expedients. Whatever ſhare of authority is left in the duke's hands, will be employed to the deſtruction of the nation; and even the additional reſtraints, by diſcovering the public diffidence and averſion, will ſerve him as incitements to put himſelf in a condition entirely ſuperior and independent. And as the laws of England ſtill make reſiſtance treaſon, and neither do nor can admit of any poſitive exceptions; what folly to leave the kingdom in ſo perilous and abſurd a ſituation; where the greateſt virtue will be expoſed to the moſt ſevere proſcription, and where the laws can only

be

be ſaved by expedients, which theſe ſame laws have declared the higheſt crime and enormity?

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THE court party reaſoned in an oppoſite manner. An authority, they ſaid, wholly abſolute and uncontrollable is a mere chimera, and is no-where to be found in any human inſtitutions. All government is founded on opinion and a ſenſe of duty; and wherever the ſupreme magiſtrate, by any law or poſitive preſcription, ſhocks an opinion regarded as fundamental, and eſtabliſhed with a firmneſs equal to that of his own authority, he ſubverts the principle by which he himſelf is eſtabliſhed, and can no longer hope for obedience. In European monarchies, the right of ſucceſſion is juſtly eſteemed a fundamental; and even though the whole legiſlature be veſted in a ſingle perſon, it would never be permitted him, by an edict, to diſinherit his lawful heir, and call a ſtranger or more diſtant relation to the throne. Abuſes in other parts of government are capable of redreſs, from more diſpaſſionate inquiry or better information of the ſovereign, and till then ought patiently to be endured: But violations of the right of ſucceſſion draw ſuch terrible conſequences after them as are not to be paralleled by any other grievance or inconvenience. Vainly is it pleaded that England is a mixed monarchy; and that a law, aſſented to by king, lords, and commons, is enacted by the concurrence of every part of the ſtate: It is plain that there remains a very powerful party, who may indeed be out-voted, but who never will deem a law, ſubverſive of hereditary right, anywiſe valid or obligatory. Limitations, ſuch as are propoſed by the king, give no ſhock to the conſtitution, which, in many particulars, is already limited; and they may be ſo calculated as to ſerve every purpoſe ſought for by an excluſion. If the ancient barriers againſt regal authority have been able, during ſo many ages, to remain impregnable;

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pregnable; how much more, thoſe additional ones, which, by depriving the monarch of power, tend ſo far to their own ſecurity? The ſame jealouſy too of religion, which has engaged the people to lay theſe reſtraints upon the ſucceſſor, will extremely leſſen the number of his partiſans, and make it utterly impracticable for him, either by force or artifice, to break the fetters impoſed upon him. The king's age and vigorous ſtate of health promiſe him a long life: And can it be prudent to tear in pieces the whole ſtate, in order to provide againſt a contingency, which, it is very likely, may never happen? No human ſchemes can ſecure the public in all poſſible, imaginable events; and the bill of excluſion itſelf, however accurately framed, leaves room for obvious and natural ſuppoſitions, to which it pretends not to provide any remedy. Should the duke have a ſon, after the king's death, muſt that ſon, without any default of his own, forfeit his title? or muſt the princeſs of Orange deſcend from the throne, in order to give place to the lawful ſucceſſor? But were all theſe reaſonings falſe, it ſtill remains to be conſidered that, in public deliberations, we ſeek not the expedient which is beſt in itſelf, but the beſt of ſuch as are practicable. The king willingly conſents to limitations, and has already offered ſome which are of the utmoſt importance: But he is determined to endure any extremity rather than allow the right of ſucceſſion to be invaded. Let us beware of that factious violence, which leads to demand more than will be granted; leſt we loſe the advantage of thoſe beneficial conceſſions, and leave the nation, on the king's demiſe, at the mercy of a zealous prince, irritated with the ill uſage, which, he imagines, he has already met with.

In the houſe of commons, the reaſoning of the excluſioniſts appeared the more convincing; and the

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the bill paſſed by a great majority. It was in the houſe of peers that the king expected to oppoſe it with ſucceſs. The court party was there ſo prevalent, that it was carried only by a majority of two to pay ſo much regard to the bill as even to commit it. When it came to be debated, the conteſt was violent. Shafteſbury, Sunderland, and Eſſex, argued for it: Halifax chiefly conducted the debate againſt it, and diſplayed an extent of capacity, and a force of eloquence, which had never been ſurpaſſed in that aſſembly. He was animated, as well by the greatneſs of the occaſion, as by a rivalſhip with his uncle Shafteſbury; whom, during that day's debate, he ſeemed, in the judgment of all, to have totally eclipſed. The king was preſent during the whole debate, which was prolonged till eleven at night. The bill was thrown out by a conſiderable majority. All the biſhops, except three, voted againſt it. Beſides the influence of the court over them; the church of England, they imagined or pretended, was in greater danger from the prevalence of preſbyterianiſm than of popery, which, though favoured by the duke, and even by the king, was extremely repugnant to the genius of the nation.

15th Nov.

Excluſion-bill rejected.

The commons diſcovered much ill humour upon this diſappointment. They immediately voted an addreſs for the removal of Halifax from the king's councils and preſence for ever. Though the pretended cauſe was his adviſing the late frequent prorogations of parliament, the real reaſon was apparently his vigorous oppoſition to the excluſion-bill. When the king applied for money to enable him to maintain Tangiers, which he declared his preſent revenues totally unable to defend; inſtead of complying, they voted ſuch an addreſs as was in reality a remonſtrance, and one little leſs violent than that famous remonſtrance, which uſhered in the civil wars.

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wars. All the abuſes of government, from the beginning almoſt of the reign, are there inſiſted on; the Dutch war, the alliance with France, the prorogations and diſſolutions of parliament; and as all theſe meaſures, as well as the *damnable* and *helliſh* plot, are there aſcribed to the machinations of papiſts, it was plainly inſinuated that the king had, all along, lain under the influence of that party, and was in reality the chief conſpirator againſt the religion and liberties of his people.

THE commons, though they conducted the great buſineſs of the excluſion with extreme violence and even imprudence, had yet much reaſon for the jealouſy which gave riſe to it: But their vehement proſecution of the popiſh plot, even after ſo long an interval, diſcovers ſuch a ſpirit, either of credulity or injuſtice, as admits of no apology. The impeachment of the catholic lords in the Tower was revived; and as viſcount Stafford, from his age, infirmities, and narrow capacity, was deemed the leaſt capable of defending himſelf, it was determined to make him the firſt victim, that his condemnation might pave the way for a ſentence againſt the reſt. The chancellor, now created earl of Not-

30th Nov. tingham, was appointed high ſteward for conducting the trial.

Trial of Stafford;

THREE witneſſes were produced againſt the priſoner; Oates, Dugdale, and Turberville. Oates ſwore, that he ſaw Fenwic, the Jeſuit, deliver to Stafford a commiſſion ſigned by de Oliva, general of the Jeſuits, appointing him pay-maſter to the papal army, which was to be levied for the ſubduing of England: For this ridiculous impoſture ſtill maintained its credit with the commons. Dugdale gave teſtimony, that the priſoner, at Tixal, a ſeat of lord Aſton's, had endeavoured to engage him in the deſign of murdering the king; and had promiſed him, beſides the honour of being ſainted by

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by the church, a reward of 500 pounds for that ſervice. Turberville depoſed, that the priſoner, in his own houſe at Paris, had made him a like propoſal. To offer money for murdering a king, without laying down any ſcheme by which the aſſaſſin may inſure ſome probability or poſſibility of eſcape, is ſo incredible in itſelf, and may ſo eaſily be maintained by any proſtitute evidence, that an accuſation of that nature, not accompanied with circumſtances, ought very little to be attended to by any court of judicature. But notwithſtanding the ſmall hold which the witneſſes afforded, the priſoner was able, in many material particulars, to diſcredit their teſtimony. It was ſworn by Dugdale, that Stafford had aſſiſted in a great conſult of the catholics held at Tixal; but Stafford proved by undoubted teſtimony, that at the time aſſigned he was in Bath, and in that neighbourhood. Turberville had ſerved a noviciate among the Dominicans; but having deſerted the convent, he had enliſted as a trooper in the French army; and being diſmiſſed that ſervice, he now lived in London, abandoned by all his relations, and expoſed to great poverty. Stafford proved, by the evidence of his gentleman and his page, that Turberville had never, either at Paris or at London, been ſeen in his company; and it might juſtly appear ſtrange, that a perſon, who had ſo important a ſecret in his keeping, was ſo long entirely neglected by him.

THE clamour and outrage of the populace, during the trial, were extreme: Great abilities and eloquence were diſplayed by the managers, ſir William Jones, ſir Francis Winnington, and ſerjeant Maynard: Yet did the priſoner, under all theſe diſadvantages, make a better defence than was expected, either by his friends or his enemies: The unequal conteſt in which he was engaged, was a plentiful ſource of compaſſion to every mind, ſeaſoned with humanity. He repreſented that,

during

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during a courſe of forty years, from the very commencement of the civil wars, he had, through many dangers, difficulties, and loſſes, ſtill maintained his loyalty: And was it credible, that now, in his old age, eaſy in his circumſtances, but diſpirited by infirmities, he would belye the whole courſe of his life, and engage againſt his royal maſter, from whom he had ever received kind treatment, in the moſt deſperate and moſt bloody of all conſpiracies? He remarked the infamy of the witneſſes; the contradictions and abſurdities of their teſtimony; the extreme indigence in which they had lived, though engaged, as they pretended, in a conſpiracy with kings, princes, and nobles; the credit and opulence to which they were at preſent raiſed. With a ſimplicity and tenderneſs more perſuaſive than the greateſt oratory, he ſtill made proteſtations of his innocence, and could not forbear, every moment, expreſſing the moſt lively ſurpriſe and indignation at the audacious impudence of the witneſſes.

It will appear aſtoniſhing to us, as it did to Stafford himſelf, that the peers, after a ſolemn trial of ſix days, ſhould, by a majority of twenty-four voices, give ſentence againſt him. He received however with reſignation the fatal verdict. *God's holy name be praiſed,* was the only exclamation which he uttered. When the high-ſteward told him that the peers would intercede with the king for remitting the more cruel and ignominious parts of the ſentence, hanging and quartering, he burſt into tears: But he told the lords that he was moved to this weakneſs, by his ſenſe of their goodneſs, not by any terror of that fate which he was doomed to ſuffer.

It is remarkable that, after Charles, as is uſual in ſuch caſes, had remitted to Stafford the hanging and quartering, the two ſheriffs, Bethel and Corniſh, indulging their own republican humour, and complying

complying with the prevalent ſpirit of their party, ever jealous of monarchy, ſtarted a doubt with regard to the king's power of exerciſing even this ſmall degree of lenity. "Since he cannot pardon "the whole," ſaid they, "how can he have power "to remit any part of the ſentence?" They propoſed the doubt to both houſes: The peers pronounced it ſuperfluous; and even the commons, apprehenſive leſt a queſtion of this nature might make way for Stafford's eſcape, gave this ſingular anſwer: "This houſe is *content*, that the ſheriffs "do execute William late viſcount Stafford by "ſevering his head from his body *only*." Nothing can be a ſtronger proof of the fury of the times, than that lord Ruſſel, notwithſtanding the virtue and humanity of his character, ſeconded in the houſe this barbarous ſcruple of the ſheriffs.

In the interval between the ſentence and execution, many efforts were made to ſhake the reſolution of the infirm and aged priſoner, and to bring him to ſome confeſſion of the treaſon for which he was condemned. It was even rumoured, that he had confeſſed; and the zealous partymen, who, no doubt, had ſecretly, notwithſtanding their credulity, entertained ſome doubts with regard to the reality of the popiſh conſpiracy, expreſſed great triumph on the occaſion. But Stafford, when again called before the houſe of peers, diſcovered many ſchemes, which had been laid by himſelf and others for procuring a toleration to the catholics, at leaſt a mitigation of the penal laws enacted againſt them: And he proteſted that this was the ſole treaſon of which he had ever been guilty.

Stafford now prepared himſelf for death with the intrepidity which became his birth and ſtation, and which was the natural reſult of the innocence and integrity which, during the courſe of a long life, he had ever maintained: His mind ſeemed even to

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collect new force from the violence and oppreſſion under which he laboured. When going to execution, he called for a cloak to defend him againſt the rigour of the ſeaſon: "Perhaps," ſaid he, "I may "ſhake with cold; but I truſt in God, not for fear."

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and execution.

On the ſcaffold, he continued, with reiterated and earneſt aſſeverations, to make proteſtations of his innocence: All his fervour was exerciſed on that point: When he mentioned the witneſſes, whoſe perjuries had bereaved him of life, his expreſſions were full of mildneſs and of charity. He ſolemnly diſavowed all thoſe immoral principles, which overzealous proteſtants had aſcribed without diſtinction to the church of Rome: And he hoped, he ſaid, that the time was now approaching, when the preſent deluſion would be diſſipated; and when the force of truth, though late, would engage the whole world to make reparation to his injured honour.

THE populace, who had exulted at Stafford's trial and condemnation, were now melted into tears at the ſight of that tender fortitude which ſhone forth in each feature, and motion, and accent of this aged noble. Their profound ſilence was only interrupted by ſighs and groans: With difficulty they found ſpeech to aſſent to thoſe proteſtations of innocence, which he frequently repeated: "We believe "you, my lord! God bleſs you, my lord!" Theſe expreſſions with a faultering accent flowed from them. The executioner himſelf was touched with ſympathy. Twice he lifted up the ax, with an intent to ſtrike the fatal blow; and as often felt his reſolution to fail him. A deep ſigh was heard to accompany his laſt effort, which laid Stafford for ever at reſt. All the ſpectators ſeemed to feel the blow. And when the head was held up to them with the uſual cry, *This is the head of a traitor*, no clamour of aſſent was uttered. Pity, remorſe, and aſtoniſhment, had taken poſſeſſion of every heart, and diſplayed itſelf in every countenance.

THIS

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THIS is the laſt blood which was ſhed on account of the popiſh plot: An incident which, for the credit of the nation, it were better to bury in eternal oblivion; but which it is neceſſary to perpetuate, as well to maintain the truth of hiſtory, as to warn, if poſſible, their poſterity and all mankind never again to fall into ſo ſhameful, ſo barbarous a deluſion.

THE execution of Stafford gratified the prejudices of the country party; but it contributed nothing to their power and ſecurity: On the contrary, by exciting commiſeration, it tended ſtill farther to increaſe that diſbelief of the whole plot, which began now to prevail. The commons, therefore, not to loſe the preſent opportunity, reſolved to make both friends and enemies ſenſible of their power. They paſſed a bill for eaſing the proteſtant diſſenters, and for repealing the perſecuting ſtatute of the thirty-fifth of Elizabeth: This laudable bill was likewiſe carried through the houſe of peers. The chief juſtice was very obnoxious for diſmiſſing the grand jury in an irregular manner, and thereby diſappointing that bold meaſure of Shafteſbury and his friends, who had preſented the duke as a recuſant. For this crime the commons ſent up an impeachment againſt him; as alſo againſt Jones and Weſton, two of the judges, who, in ſome ſpeeches from the bench, had gone ſo far as to give to many of the firſt reformers the appellation of fanatics.

THE king, in rejecting the excluſion-bill, had ſheltered himſelf ſecurely behind the authority of the houſe of peers; and the commons had been deprived of the uſual pretence, to attack the ſovereign himſelf, under colour of attacking his miniſters and counſellors. In proſecution, however, of the ſcheme, which he had formed, of throwing the blame on the commons in caſe of any rupture, he made them a new ſpeech. After warning them, that a neglect of this opportunity would never be

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retrieved, he added theſe words: "I did promiſe "you the fulleſt ſatisfaction, which your hearts "could wiſh, for the ſecurity of the proteſtant "religion, and to concur with you in any reme- "dies, which might conſiſt with preſerving the "ſucceſſion of the crown in its due and legal courſe "of deſcent. I do again, with the ſame reſerva- "tions, renew the ſame promiſes to you: And "being thus ready on my part to do all that can "reaſonably be expected from me, I ſhould be "glad to know from you, as ſoon as may be, how "far I ſhall be aſſiſted by you, and what it is you "deſire from me."

THE moſt reaſonable objection againſt the limitations propoſed by the king, is, that they introduced too conſiderable an innovation in the government, and almoſt totally annihilated the power of the future monarch. But conſidering the preſent diſpoſition of the commons and their leaders, we may fairly preſume, that this objection would have ſmall weight with them, and that their diſguſt againſt the court would rather incline them to diminiſh than ſupport regal authority. They ſtill hoped, from the king's urgent neceſſities and his uſual facility, that he would throw himſelf wholly into their hands; and that thus, without waiting for the acceſſion of the duke, they might immediately render themſelves abſolute maſters of the government. The commons, therefore, beſides inſiſting ſtill on the excluſion, proceeded to bring in bills of an important, and ſome of them of an alarming nature: One to renew the triennial act, which had been ſo inadvertently repealed in the beginning of the reign: A ſecond to make the office of judge during good behaviour: A third to declare the levying of money without conſent of parliament to be high treaſon: A fourth to order an aſſociation for the ſafety of his majeſty's perſon, for defence of the proteſtant religion, for the preſervation of the proteſtant ſubjects againſt

Violence of the commons.

againſt all invaſions and oppoſition whatever, and for preventing the duke of York or any papiſt from ſucceeding to the crown. The memory of the covenant was too recent for men to overlook the conſequences of ſuch an aſſociation: And the king, who was particularly converſant in Davila, could not fail of recollecting a memorable foreign inſtance, to fortify this domeſtic experience.

THE commons alſo paſſed many votes, which, though they had not the authority of laws, ſerved however to diſcover the temper and diſpoſition of the houſe. They voted, that whoever had adviſed his majeſty to refuſe the excluſion-bill, were promoters of popery and enemies to the king and kingdom. In another vote, they named the marquis of Worceſter, the earls of Clarendon, Feverſham, and Halifax, Laurence Hyde, and Edward Seymour, as thoſe dangerous enemies; and they requeſted his majeſty to remove them from his perſon and councils for ever: They voted that, till the excluſion-bill were paſſed, they could not, conſiſtent with the truſt repoſed in them, grant the king any manner of ſupply. And leſt he ſhould be enabled, by any other expedient, to ſupport the government, and preſerve himſelf independent, they paſſed another vote, in which they declared that whoever ſhould hereafter lend, by way of advance, any money upon thoſe branches of the king's revenue, ariſing from cuſtoms, exciſe, or hearth-money, ſhould be judged a hinderer of the ſitting of parliament, and be reſponſible for the ſame in parliament.

THE king might preſume that the peers, who had rejected the excluſion-bill, would ſtill continue to defend the throne, and that none of the dangerous bills, introduced into the other houſe, would ever be preſented for the royal aſſent and approbation. But as there remained no hopes of bringing the commons to any better temper, and as their farther ſitting ſerved only to keep faction alive, and to

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1681. 10th Jan. Diſſolution of the parliament.

perpetuate the general ferment of the nation, he came ſecretly to a reſolution of proroguing them. They got intelligence about a quarter of an hour before the black rod came to their door. Not to loſe ſuch precious time, they paſſed in a tumultuous manner ſome extraordinary reſolutions. They voted, *that* whoſoever adviſed his majeſty to prorogue this parliament to any other purpoſe than in order to paſs the bill of excluſion, was a betrayer of the king, of the proteſtant religion, and of the kingdom of England; a promoter of the French intereſt, and a penſioner of France: *That* thanks be given to the city of London for their manifeſt loyalty, and for their care and vigilance in the preſervation of the king and of the proteſtant religion: *That* it is the opinion of this houſe, that that city was burned in the year 1666 by the papiſts, deſigning thereby to introduce arbitrary power and popery into the kingdom: *That* humble application be made to his majeſty for reſtoring the duke of Monmouth to all his offices and commands, from which, it appears to the houſe, he had been removed by the influence of the duke of York: And *that* it is the opinion of the houſe that the proſecution of the proteſtant diſſenters upon the penal laws is at this time grievous to the ſubject, a weakening of the proteſtant intereſt, an encouragement of popery, and dangerous to the peace of the kingdom.

The king paſſed ſome laws of no great importance: But the bill for repealing the thirty-fifth of Elizabeth, he privately ordered the clerk of the crown not to preſent to him. By this artifice, which was equally diſobliging to the country party as if the bill had been rejected, and at the ſame time implied ſome timidity in the king, that ſalutary act was for the preſent eluded. The king had often of himſelf attempted, and ſometimes by irregular means, to give indulgence to non-conformiſts: But beſides that he had uſually expected to comprehend

hend the catholics in this liberty, the preſent refractory diſpoſition of the ſectaries had much incenſed him againſt them; and he was reſolved, if poſſible, to keep them ſtill at mercy. 1681.

THE laſt votes of the commons ſeemed to be an attempt of forming indirectly an aſſociation againſt the crown, after they found that their aſſociation bill could not paſs: The diſſenting intereſt, the city, and the duke of Monmouth, they endeavoured to connect with the country party. A civil war indeed never appeared ſo likely as at preſent; and it was high time for the king to diſſolve a parliament, which ſeemed to have entertained ſuch dangerous projects. Soon after, he ſummoned another. Though he obſerved, that the country party had eſtabliſhed their intereſt ſo ſtrongly in all the electing boroughs, that he could not hope for any diſpoſition more favourable in the new parliament, this expedient was ſtill a proſecution of his former project, of trying every method by which he might form an accommodation with the commons: And if all failed, he hoped that he could the better juſtify to his people, at leaſt to his party, a final breach with them.

IT had always been much regretted by the royaliſts, during the civil wars, that the long parliament had been aſſembled at Weſtminſter, and had thereby received force and encouragement from the vicinity of a potent and factious city, which had zealouſly embraced their party. Though the king was now poſſeſſed of guards, which in ſome meaſure overawed the populace, he was determined ſtill farther to obviate all inconveniencies; and he ſummoned the new parliament to meet at Oxford. The city of London ſhowed how juſt a judgment he had formed of their diſpoſitions. Beſides reelecting the ſame members, they voted thanks to them for their former behaviour, in endeavouring to diſcover the depth of the *horrid* and *helliſh* popiſh

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plot, and to exclude the duke of York, the principal cauſe of the ruin and miſery impending over the nation. Monmouth with fifteen peers preſented a petition againſt aſſembling the parliament at Oxford, "where the two houſes," they ſaid, "could "not be in ſafety; but would be eaſily expoſed to "the ſwords of the papiſts and their adherents, of "whom too many had creeped into his majeſty's "guards." Theſe inſinuations, which pointed ſo evidently at the king himſelf, were not calculated to perſuade him, but to inflame the people.

THE excluſioniſts might have concluded, both from the king's diſſolution of the laſt parliament, and from his ſummoning of the preſent to meet at Oxford, that he was determined to maintain his declared reſolution of rejecting their favourite bill: But they ſtill flattered themſelves that his urgent neceſſities would influence his eaſy temper, and finally gain them the aſcendant. The leaders came to parliament, attended not only by their ſervants, but by numerous bands of their partiſans. The four city members in particular were followed by great multitudes, wearing ribbons, in which were woven theſe words, *No popery! no ſlavery!* The king had his guards regularly muſtered: His party likewiſe endeavoured to make a ſhow of their ſtrength: And on the whole, the aſſembly at Oxford rather bore the appearance of a tumultuous Poliſh diet, than of a regular Engliſh parliament.

March 21.

THE king, who had hitherto employed the moſt gracious expreſſions to all his parliaments, particularly the two laſt, thought proper to addreſs himſelf to the preſent in a more authoritative manner.

New parliament at Oxford.

He complained of the unwarrantable proceedings of the former houſe of commons; and ſaid that, as he would never uſe arbitrary government himſelf, neither would he ever ſuffer it in others. By calling, however, this parliament ſo ſoon, he had ſufficiently ſhown that no paſt irregularities could in-

ſpire him with a prejudice againſt thoſe aſſemblies. He now afforded them, he added, yet another opportunity of providing for the public ſafety; and to all the world had given one evidence more, that on his part he had not neglected the duty incumbent on him. CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

THE commons were not overawed by the magiſterial air of the king's ſpeech. They conſiſted almoſt entirely of the ſame members; they choſe the ſame ſpeaker; and they inſtantly fell into the ſame meaſures, the impeachment of Danby, the repeal of the perſecuting ſtatute of Elizabeth, the inquiry into the popiſh plot, and the bill of excluſion. So violent were they on this laſt article, that no other expedient, however plauſible, could ſo much as be hearkened to. Ernley, one of the king's miniſters, propoſed that the duke ſhould be baniſhed, during life, five hundred miles from England, and that on the king's demiſe the next heir ſhould be conſtituted regent with regal power: Yet even this expedient, which left the duke only the bare title of king, could not, though ſeconded by ſir Thomas Lyttleton and ſir Thomas Mompeſſon, obtain the attention of the houſe. The paſt diſappointments of the country party, and the oppoſition made by the court, had only rendered them more united, more haughty, and more determined. No method but their own, of excluding the duke, could give them any ſatisfaction.

THERE was one Fitz-harris, an Iriſh catholic, who had inſinuated himſelf into the dutcheſs of Portſmouth's acquaintance, and had been very buſy in conveying to her, intelligence of any libel written by the country party, or of any deſigns entertained againſt her or againſt the court. For ſervices of this kind, and perhaps too, from a regard to his father, ſir Edward Fitz-harris, who had been an eminent royaliſt, he had received from the king a preſent of 250 pounds. This man met with one Fitz-harris's caſe.

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Everard, a Scotchman, a ſpy of the excluſioniſts, and an informer concerning the popiſh plot; and he engaged him to write a libel againſt the king, the duke, and the whole adminiſtration. What Fitz-harris's intentions were, cannot well be aſcertained: It is probable, as he afterwards aſſerted, that he meant to carry this libel to his patron, the dutcheſs, and to make a merit of the diſcovery. Everard, who ſuſpected ſome other deſign, and who was well pleaſed on his ſide to have the merit of a diſcovery with his patrons, reſolved to betray his friend: He poſted ſir William Waller, a noted juſtice of peace, and two perſons more, behind the hangings, and gave them an opportunity of ſeeing and hearing the whole tranſaction. The libel, ſketched out by Fitz-harris, and executed partly by him, partly by Everard, was the moſt furious, indecent, and outrageous performance imaginable; and ſuch as was fitter to hurt than ſerve any party, which ſhould be ſo imprudent as to adopt it. Waller carried the intelligence to the king, and obtained a warrant for committing Fitz-harris, who happened, at that very time, to have a copy of the libel in his pocket. Finding himſelf now delivered over to the law, he reſolved to pay court to the popular party, who were alone able to protect him, and by whom he obſerved almoſt all trials to be governed and directed. He affirmed, that he had been employed by the court to write the libel, in order to throw the odium of it on the excluſioniſts: But this account, which was within the bounds of credibility, he diſgraced by circumſtances which are altogether abſurd and improbable. The intention of the miniſters, he ſaid, was to ſend about copies to all the heads of the country party; and the moment they received them, they were to be arreſted, and a conſpiracy to be imputed to them. That he might merit favour by ſtill more important intelligence, he commenced a diſcoverer of the great popiſh plot; and he failed not to confirm all

all the tremendous circumſtances inſiſted on by his predeceſſors. He ſaid, that the ſecond Dutch war was entered into with a view of extirpating the proteſtant religion, both abroad and at home; that father Parry, a Jeſuit, on the diſappointment by the peace, told him, that the catholics reſolved to murder the king, and had even engaged the queen in that deſign; that the envoy of Modena offered him 10,000 pounds to kill the king, and upon his refuſal the envoy ſaid, that the dutcheſs of Mazarine, who was as expert at poiſoning as her ſiſter, the counteſs of Soiſſons, would, with a little phial, execute that deſign; that upon the king's death the army in Flanders was to come over, and maſſacre the proteſtants; that money was raiſed in Italy for recruits and ſupplies, and there ſhould be no more parliaments; and that the duke was privy to this whole plan, and had even entered into the deſign of Godfrey's murder, which was executed in the manner related by Prance.

The popular leaders had, all along, been very deſirous of having an accuſation againſt the duke; and though Oates and Bedloe, in their firſt evidence, had not dared to go ſo far, both Dugdale and Dangerfield had afterwards been encouraged to ſupply ſo material a defect, by comprehending him in the conſpiracy. The commons, therefore, finding that Fitz-harris was alſo willing to ſerve this purpoſe, were not aſhamed to adopt his evidence, and reſolved for that end to ſave him from the deſtruction with which he was at preſent threatened. The king had removed him from the city-priſon, where he was expoſed to be tampered with by the excluſioniſts; had ſent him to the Tower; and had ordered him to be proſecuted by an indictment a common law. In order to prevent his trial and execution, an impeachment was voted by the commons againſt him, and ſent up to the lords. That they might ſhew the greater

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greater contempt of the court, they ordered, by way of deriſion, that the impeachment ſhould be carried up by ſecretary Jenkins; who was ſo provoked by the intended affront, that he at firſt refuſed obedience; though afterwards, being threatened with commitment, he was induced to comply. The lords voted to remit the affair to the ordinary courts of juſtice, before whom, as the attorney-general informed them, it was already determined to try Fitz-harris. The commons maintained, that the peers were obliged to receive every impeachment from the commons; and this indeed ſeems to have been the firſt inſtance of their refuſal: They therefore voted, that the lords, in rejecting their impeachment, had denied juſtice, and had violated the conſtitution of parliament. They alſo declared, that whatever inferior court ſhould proceed againſt Fitz-harris, or any one that lay under impeachment, would be guilty of a high breach of privilege. Great heats were likely to enſue; and as the king ſaw no appearance of any better temper in the commons, he gladly laid hold of the opportunity, afforded by a quarrel between the two houſes; and he proceeded to a diſſolution of the parliament. The ſecret was ſo well kept, that the commons had no intimation of it, till the black rod came to their doors, and ſummoned them to attend the king at the houſe of peers.

Parliament diſſolved.

THIS vigorous meaſure, though it might have been foreſeen, excited ſuch aſtoniſhment in the country party, as deprived them of all ſpirit, and reduced them to abſolute deſpair. They were ſenſible, though too late, that the king had finally taken his reſolution, and was determined to endure any extremity rather than ſubmit to thoſe terms which they had reſolved to impoſe upon him. They found, that he had patiently waited till affairs ſhould come to full maturity; and having now engaged a national

national party on his ſide, had boldly ſet his enemies at defiance. No parliament, they knew, would be ſummoned for ſome years; and during that long interval, the court, though perhaps at the head of an inferior party, yet being poſſeſſed of all authority, would have every advantage over a body diſperſed and diſunited. Theſe reflections crowded upon every one; and all the excluſioniſts were terrified, leſt Charles ſhould follow the blow by ſome action more violent, and immediately take vengeance on them for their long and obſtinate oppoſition to his meaſures. The king on his part was no leſs apprehenſive, leſt deſpair might prompt them to have recourſe to force, and make ſome ſudden attempt upon his perſon. Both parties therefore hurried from Oxford; and in an inſtant, that city, ſo crowded and buſy, was left in its uſual emptineſs and tranquillity.

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THE court party gathered force from the diſperſion and aſtoniſhment of their antagoniſts, and adhered more firmly to the king, whoſe reſolutions, they now ſaw, could be entirely depended on. The violences of the excluſioniſts were every where exclaimed againſt and aggravated; and even the reality of the plot, that great engine of their authority, was openly called in queſtion. The clergy eſpecially were buſy in this great revolution; and being moved, partly by their own fears, partly by the inſinuations of the court, they repreſented all their antagoniſts as ſectaries and republicans, and rejoiced in eſcaping thoſe perils, which they believed to have been hanging over them. Principles the moſt oppoſite to civil liberty were every where inforced from the pulpit, and adopted in numerous addreſſes; where the king was flattered in his preſent meaſures, and congratulated on his eſcape from parliaments. Could words have been depended on, the nation appeared to be running faſt into voluntary ſervitude, and ſeemed even ambitious of reſigning into the king's

Victory of the royaliſts.

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king's hands all the privileges, tranſmitted to them, through ſo many ages, by their gallant anceſtors.

But Charles had ſagacity enough to diſtinguiſh between men's real internal ſentiments, and the language which zeal and oppoſition to a contrary faction may ſometimes extort from them. Notwithſtanding all theſe profeſſions of duty and obedience, he was reſolved not to truſt, for a long time, the people with a new election, but to depend entirely on his own œconomy for alleviating thoſe neceſſities under which he laboured. Great retrenchments were made in the houſehold: Even his favourite navy was neglected: Tangiers, though it had coſt great ſums of money, was a few years after abandoned and demoliſhed. The mole was entirely deſtroyed; and the garriſon, being brought over to England, ſerved to augment that ſmall army, which the king relied on, as one ſolid baſis of his authority. It had been happy for the nation, had Charles uſed his victory with juſtice and moderation equal to the prudence and dexterity with which he obtained it.

The firſt ſtep, taken by the court, was the trial of Fitz-harris. Doubts were raiſed by the jury with regard to their power of trying him, after the concluding vote of the commons: But the judges took upon them to decide the queſtion in the affirmative; and the jury were obliged to proceed. The writing of the libel was clearly proved upon Fitz-harris: The only queſtion was with regard to his intentions. He aſſerted, that he was a ſpy of the court, and had accordingly carried the libel to the dutcheſs of Portſmouth; and he was deſirous that the jury ſhould, in this tranſaction, conſider him as a cheat, not as a traitor. He failed however ſomewhat in the proof; and was brought in guilty of treaſon by the jury.

Finding himſelf entirely in the hands of the king, he now retracted all his former impoſtures with regard to the popiſh plot, and even endeavoured

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to atone for them by new impoſtures againſt the country party. He affirmed, that theſe fictions had been extorted from him by the ſuggeſtions and artifices of Treby the recorder, and of Bethel and Corniſh, the two ſheriffs: This account he perſiſted in even at his execution; and though men knew, that nothing could be depended on, which came from one ſo corrupt, and ſo loſt to all ſenſe of honour; yet were they inclined, from his perſeverance, to rely ſomewhat more on his veracity in theſe laſt aſſeverations. But it appears, that his wife had ſome connections with Mrs. Wall, the favourite maid of the dutcheſs of Portſmouth; and Fitz-harris hoped, if he perſiſted in a ſtory agreeable to the court, that ſome favour might, on that account, be ſhown to his family.

It is amuſing to reflect on the ſeveral lights, in which this ſtory has been repreſented by the oppoſite factions. The country party affirmed, that Fitz-harris had been employed by the court, in order to throw the odium of the libel on the excluſioniſts, and thereby give riſe to a proteſtant plot: The court party maintained, that the excluſioniſts had found out Fitz-harris, a ſpy of the miniſters, and had ſet him upon this undertaking, from an intention of loading the court with the imputation of ſuch a deſign upon the excluſioniſts. Rather than acquit their antagoniſts, both ſides were willing to adopt an account the moſt intricate and incredible. It was a ſtrange ſituation, in which the people, at this time, were placed; to be every day tortured with theſe perplexed ſtories, and inflamed with ſuch dark ſuſpicions againſt their fellow-citizens. This was no leſs than the fifteenth falſe plot, or ſham-plot, as they were then called, with which the court, it was imagined, had endeavoured to load their adverſaries [1].

[1] College's trial.

The

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THE country party had intended to make uſe of Fitz-harris's evidence againſt the duke and the catholics; and his execution was therefore a great mortification to them. But the king and his miniſters were reſolved not to be contented with ſo ſlender an advantage. They were determined to purſue the victory, and to employ againſt the excluſioniſts thoſe very offenſive arms, however unfair, which that party had laid up in ſtore againſt their antagoniſts. The whole gang of ſpies, witneſſes, informers, ſuborners, who had ſo long been ſupported and encouraged by the leading patriots, finding now that the king was entirely maſter, turned ſhort upon their old patrons, and offered their ſervice to the miniſters. To the diſgrace of the court and of the age, they were received with hearty welcome; and their teſtimony or rather perjury made uſe of, in order to commit legal murder upon the oppoſite party. With an air of triumph and deriſion it was aſked, "Are "not theſe men good witneſſes, who have eſtabliſh-"ed the popiſh plot, upon whoſe teſtimony Staf-"ford and ſo many catholics have been executed, "and whom you yourſelves have ſo long celebrated "as men of credit and veracity? You have admit-"ted them into your boſom: They are beſt ac-"quainted with your treaſons: They are deter-"mined in another ſhape to ſerve their king and "country: And you cannot complain, that the "ſame meaſure, which you meted to others, ſhould "now, by a righteous doom or vengeance, be "meaſured out to you."

IT is certain, that the principle of retaliation may ſerve in ſome caſes as a full apology, in others as an alleviation, for a conduct which would otherwiſe be expoſed to great blame. But theſe infamous arts, which poiſon juſtice in its very ſource, and break all the bands of human ſociety, are ſo deteſtable and dangerous, that no pretence of retaliation can be pleaded as an apology or even an alleviation of the crime

crime incurred by them. On the contrary, the greater indignation the king and his miniſters felt, when formerly expoſed to the perjuries of abandoned men, the more reluctance ſhould they now have diſcovered againſt employing the ſame inſtruments of vengeance upon their antagoniſts.

THE firſt perſon, on whom the miniſters fell, was one College, a London joiner, who had become extremely noted for his zeal againſt popery, and was much connected with Shafteſbury and the leaders of the country party: For as they relied much upon the populace, men of College's rank and ſtation were uſeful to them. College had been in Oxford armed with ſword and piſtol during the ſitting of the parliament; and this was made the foundation of his crime. It was pretended that a conſpiracy had been entered into to ſeize the king's perſon, and detain him in confinement, till he ſhould make the conceſſions demanded of him. The ſheriffs of London were in ſtrong oppoſition to the court; and it was not ſtrange, that the grand jury named by them rejected the bill againſt College. The priſoner was therefore ſent to Oxford, where the treaſon was ſaid to have been committed. Lord Norris, a courtier, was ſheriff of the county; and the inhabitants were in general devoted to the court party. A jury was named, conſiſting entirely of royaliſts; and though they were men of credit and character, yet ſuch was the factious rage which prevailed, that little juſtice could be expected by the priſoner. Some papers, containing hints and directions for his defence, were taken from him, as he was conducted to his trial: An iniquity, which ſome pretended to juſtify by alleging, that a like violence had been practiſed againſt a priſoner during the fury of the popiſh plot. Such wild notions of retaliation were at that time propagated by the court party.

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THE witneſſes produced againſt College were Dugdale, Turberville, Haynes, Smith; men who had before given evidence againſt the catholics; and whom the jury, for that very reaſon, regarded as the moſt perjured villains. College, though beſet with ſo many toils, and oppreſſed with ſo many iniquities, defended himſelf with ſpirit, courage, capacity, preſence of mind; and he invalidated the evidence of the crown, by convincing arguments and undoubted teſtimony: Yet did the jury, after half an hour's deliberation, bring in a verdict againſt him. The inhuman ſpectators received the verdict with a ſhout of applauſe: But the priſoner was nowiſe diſmayed. At his execution, he maintained the ſame manly fortitude, and ſtill denied the crime imputed to him. His whole conduct and demeanour prove him to have been a man led aſtray only by the fury of the times, and to have been governed by an honeſt, but indiſcreet, zeal for his country and his religion.

THUS the two parties, actuated by mutual rage, but cooped up within the narrow limits of the law, levelled with poiſoned daggers the moſt deadly blows againſt each other's breaſt, and buried in their factious diviſions all regard to truth, honour, and humanity.

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State of affairs in Ireland——Shafteſbury acquitted——Argyle's trial——State of affairs in Scotland——State of the miniſtry in England——New nomination of ſheriffs——Quo warrantos——Great power of the crown——A conſpiracy——Shafteſbury retires and dies——Rye-houſe plot——Conſpiracy diſcovered——Execution of the conſpirators——Trial of lord Ruſſel——His execution——Trial of Algernon Sidney——His execution——State of the nation——State of foreign affairs——King's ſickneſs and death——and character.

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1681. State of affairs in Ireland.

WHEN the Cabal entered into the myſterious alliance with France, they took care to remove the duke of Ormond from the committee of foreign affairs; and nothing tended farther to increaſe the national jealouſy, entertained againſt the new meaſures, than to ſee a man of ſo much loyalty, as well as probity and honour, excluded from public councils. They had even ſo great intereſt with the king as to get Ormond recalled from the government of Ireland; and lord Robarts, afterwards earl of Radnor, ſucceeded him in that important employment. Lord Berkeley ſucceeded Robarts; and the earl of Eſſex, Berkeley. At laſt, in the year 1677, Charles caſt his eye again upon Ormond, whom he had ſo long neglected; and ſent him over lieutenant to Ireland. "I have done every thing," ſaid the king, "to diſoblige that man; but it is not in my "power to make him my enemy." Ormond, during his diſgrace, had never joined the malcontents, nor encouraged thoſe clamours, which, with too much reaſon, but often for bad purpoſes, were raiſed againſt the king's meaſures. He even thought it his duty, regularly, though with dignity, to pay

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his court at Whitehall; and to prove that his attachments were founded on gratitude, inclination, and principle, not on any temporary advantages. All the expreſſions, which dropped from him, while neglected by the court, ſhowed more of good humour, than any prevalence of ſpleen and indignation. "I can do you no ſervice," ſaid he to his friends, "I have only the power left by my appli-"cations to do you ſome hurt." When colonel Cary Dillon ſolicited him to ſecond his pretenſions for an office, and urged that he had no friends but God and his grace: "Alas! poor Cary," replied the duke, "I pity thee: Thou couldeſt not have "two friends that poſſeſs leſs intereſt at court." "I am thrown by," ſaid he, on another occaſion, "like an old ruſty clock; yet even that neglected "machine, twice in twenty-four hours, points right."

On ſuch occaſions, when Ormond, from decency, paid his attendance at court, the king, equally aſhamed to ſhow him civility and to neglect him, was abaſhed and confounded. "Sir," ſaid the profligate Buckingham, "I wiſh to know whether it be "the duke of Ormond, that is out of favour with "your majeſty, or your majeſty with the duke of "Ormond; for, of the two, you ſeem the moſt "out of countenance."

When Charles found it his intereſt to ſhow favour to the old royaliſts, and to the church of England, Ormond, who was much revered by that whole party, could not fail of recovering, together with the government of Ireland, his former credit and authority. His adminiſtration, when lord lieutenant, correſponded to the general tenor of his life; and tended equally to promote the intereſts of the prince and people, of proteſtant and catholic. Ever firmly attached to the eſtabliſhed religion, he was able, even during thoſe jealous times, to eſcape ſuſpicion, though he gratified not vulgar prejudices by any perſecution of the popiſh party. He increaſed the revenue

revenue of Ireland to three hundred thouſand pounds a-year: He maintained a regular army of ten thouſand men: He ſupported a well-diſciplined militia of twenty thouſand: And though the act of ſettlement had ſo far been infringed, that catholics were permitted to live in corporate towns, they were guarded with ſo careful an eye, that the moſt timorous proteſtant never apprehended any danger from them. CHAP. LXIX. 1681.

THE chief object of Eſſex's ambition was to return to the ſtation of lord lieutenant, where he had behaved with honour and integrity: Shafteſbury and Buckingham bore an extreme hatred to Ormond, both from perſonal and party conſiderations: The great aim of the anti-courtiers was to throw reflections on every part of the king's government. It could be no ſurpriſe, therefore, to the lord lieutenant to learn, that his adminiſtration was attacked in parliament, particularly by Shafteſbury; but he had the ſatisfaction, at the ſame time, to hear of the keen, though polite defence, made by his ſon, the generous Oſſory. After juſtifying ſeveral particulars of Ormond's adminiſtration againſt that intriguing patriot, Oſſory proceeded in the following words: "Having ſpoken of what the lord lieutenant "has done, I preſume with the ſame truth to tell "your lordſhips what he has not done. He never "adviſed the breaking of the triple league; he "never adviſed the ſhutting up of the exchequer; "he never adviſed the declaration for a toleration; "he never adviſed the falling out with the Dutch "and the joining with France: He was not the "author of that moſt excellent poſition *Delenda eſt* "*Carthago*, that Holland, a proteſtant country, "ſhould, contrary to the true intereſts of England, "be totally deſtroyed. I beg that your lordſhips "will be ſo juſt as to judge of my father and all "men, according to their actions and their coun-"ſels." Theſe few ſentences, pronounced by a plain

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gallant ſoldier, noted for probity, had a ſurpriſing effect upon the audience, and confounded all the rhetoric of his eloquent and factious adverſary. The prince of Orange, who eſteemed the former character as much as he deſpiſed the latter, could not forbear congratulating by letter the earl of Oſſory on this new ſpecies of victory which he had obtained.

Ossory, though he ever kept at a diſtance from faction, was the moſt popular man in the kingdom; though he never made any compliance with the corrupt views of the court, was beloved and reſpected by the king. An univerſal grief appeared on his death, which happened about this time, and which the populace, as is uſual wherever they are much affected, fooliſhly aſcribed to poiſon. Ormond bore the loſs with patience and dignity; though he ever retained a pleaſing, however melancholy, ſenſe of the ſignal merit of Oſſory. "I would not exchange my dead ſon," ſaid he, "for any living ſon in Chriſtendom."

These particularities may appear a digreſſion; but it is with pleaſure, I own, that I relax myſelf for a moment in the contemplation of theſe humane aud virtuous characters, amidſt that ſcene of fury and faction, fraud and violence, in which at preſent our narration has unfortunately engaged us.

Besides the general intereſt of the country party to decry the conduct of all the king's miniſters, the prudent and peaceable adminiſtration of Ormond was in a particular manner diſpleaſing to them. In England, where the catholics were ſcarcely one to a hundred, means had been found to excite an univerſal panic, on account of inſurrections, and even maſſacres, projected by that ſect; and it could not but ſeem ſtrange that in Ireland, where they exceeded the proteſtants ſix to one, there ſhould no ſymptoms appear of any combination or conſpiracy. Such an incident, when duly conſidered, might even in England ſhake the credit of the plot, and diminiſh the authority of thoſe leaders, who had ſo long, with ſuch

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ſuch induſtry, inculcated the belief of it on the nation. Rewards, therefore, were publiſhed in Ireland to any that would bring intelligence or become witneſſes; and ſome profligates were ſent over to that kingdom, with a commiſſion to ſeek out evidence againſt the catholics. Under pretence of ſearching for arms or papers, they broke into houſes, and plundered them: They threw innocent men into priſon, and took bribes for their releaſe: And after all their diligence, it was with difficulty that that country, commonly fertile enough in witneſſes, could furniſh them with any fit for their purpoſe.

At laſt, one Fitzgerald appeared, followed by Ivey, Sanſon, Dennis, Bourke, two Macnamaras, and ſome others. Theſe men were immediately ſent over to England; and though they poſſeſſed neither character ſufficient to gain belief even for truth, nor ſenſe to invent a credible falſehood, they were careſſed, rewarded, ſupported, and recommended by the earl of Shafteſbury. Oliver Plunket, the titular primate of Ireland, a man of peaceable diſpoſitions, was condemned and executed upon ſuch teſtimony. And the Oxford parliament entered ſo far into the matter as to vote, that they were entirely ſatisfied in the reality of the *horrid* and *damnable* Iriſh plot. But ſuch deciſions, though at firſt regarded as infallible, had now loſt much of their authority; and the public ſtill remained ſomewhat indifferent and incredulous.

After the diſſolution of the parliament, and the ſubſequent victory of the royaliſts, Shafteſbury's evidences, with Turberville, Smith, and others, addreſſed themſelves to the miniſters, and gave information of high treaſon againſt their former patron. It is ſufficiently ſcandalous, that intelligence, conveyed by ſuch men, ſhould have been attended to; but there is ſome reaſon to think, that the court agents, nay the miniſters, nay the king himſelf[k],

[k] See captain Wilkinſon's narrative.

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went farther, and were active in endeavouring, though in vain, to find more reputable perſons to ſupport the blaſted credit of the Iriſh witneſſes. Shafteſbury was committed to priſon, and his indictment was preſented to the grand jury. The new ſheriffs of London, Shute and Pilkington, were engaged as deeply as their predeceſſors in the country party; and they took care to name a jury devoted to the ſame cauſe: A precaution quite neceſſary, when it was ſcarcely poſſible to find men indifferent or attached to neither party. As far as ſwearing could go, the treaſon was clearly proved againſt Shafteſbury; or rather ſo clearly as to merit no kind of credit or attention. That veteran leader of a party, enured from his early youth to faction and intrigue, to cabals and conſpiracies, was repreſented as opening without reſerve his treaſonable intentions to theſe obſcure banditti, and throwing out ſuch violent and outrageous reproaches upon the king, as none but men of low education, like themſelves, could be ſuppoſed to employ. The draught of an aſſociation, it is true, againſt popery and the duke, was found in Shafteſbury's cabinet; and dangerous inferences might be drawn from many clauſes of that paper. But it did not appear, that it had been framed by Shafteſbury, or ſo much as approved by him. And as projects of an aſſociation had been propoſed in parliament, it was very natural for this nobleman, or his correſpondents, to be thinking of ſome plan, which it might be proper to lay before that aſſembly. The grand jury, therefore, after weighing all theſe circumſtances, rejected the indictment; and the people, who attended the hall, teſtified their joy by the loudeſt acclamations, which were echoed throughout the whole city.

Shafteſbury acquitted.

About this time a ſcheme of oppreſſion was laid in Scotland, after a manner ſtill more flagrant, againſt a nobleman much leſs obnoxious than Shafteſbury; and as that country was reduced to a ſtate of almoſt total ſubjection, the project had the good fortune to ſucceed.

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1681. Argyle's trial.

THE earl of Argyle, from his youth, had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his loyalty, and his attachment to the royal family. Though his father was head of the covenanters, he himſelf refuſed to concur in any of their meaſures; and when a commiſſion of colonel was given him by the convention of ſtates, he forbore to act upon it, till it ſhould be ratified by the king. By his reſpectful behaviour, as well as by his ſervices, he made himſelf acceptable to Charles, when that prince was in Scotland: And even after the battle of Worceſter, all the misfortunes, which attended the royal cauſe, could not engage him to deſert it. Under Middleton he obſtinately perſevered to haraſs and infeſt the victorious Engliſh; and it was not till he received orders from that general, that he would ſubmit to accept of a capitulation. Such jealouſy of his loyal attachments was entertained by the commonwealth and protector, that a pretence was ſoon after fallen upon to commit him to priſon; and his confinement was rigorouſly continued till the reſtoration. The king, ſenſible of his ſervices, had remitted to him his father's forfeiture, and created him earl of Argyle; and when a moſt unjuſt ſentence was paſſed upon him by the Scottiſh parliament, Charles had anew remitted it. In the ſubſequent part of this reign, Argyle behaved himſelf dutifully; and though he ſeemed not diſpoſed to go all lengths with the court, he always appeared, even in his oppoſition, to be a man of mild diſpoſitions and peaceable deportment.

A PARLIAMENT was ſummoned at Edinburgh this ſummer, and the duke was appointed commiſſioner. Beſides granting money to the king, and voting the indefeaſible right of ſucceſſion, this parliament enacted a teſt, which all perſons, poſſeſſed of offices, civil, military, or eccleſiaſtical, were bound to take. In this teſt, the king's ſupremacy was aſſerted, the covenant renounced, paſſive

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obedience assented to, and all obligations disclaimed of endeavouring any alteration in civil or ecclesiastical establishments. This was the state of the test, as proposed by the courtiers; but the country party proposed also to insert a clause, which could not with decency be refused, expressing the person's adherence to the protestant religion. The whole was of an enormous length, considered as an oath; and what was worse, a confession of faith was there ratified, which had been imposed a little after the reformation, and which contained many articles altogether forgotten by the parliament and nation. Among others, the doctrine of resistance was inculcated; so that the test, being voted in a hurry, was found on examination to be a medley of contradiction and absurdity. Several persons, the most attached to the crown, scrupled to take it: The bishops and many of the clergy remonstrated: The earl of Queensberry refused to swear, except he might be allowed to add an explanation: And even the privy council thought it necessary to publish for general satisfaction a solution of some difficulties attending the test.

THOUGH the courtiers could not reject the clause of adhering to the protestant religion, they proposed, as a necessary mark of respect, that all princes of the blood should be exempted from taking the oath. This exception was zealously opposed by Argyle; who observed, that the sole danger to be dreaded for the protestant religion must proceed from the perversion of the royal family. By insisting on such topics, he drew on himself the secret indignation of the duke, of which he soon felt the fatal consequences.

WHEN Argyle took the test as a privy counsellor, he subjoined, in the duke's presence, an explanation, which he had beforehand communicated to that prince, and which he believed to have been approved by him. It was in these words: "I have considered the test,

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" and am very desirous of giving obedience as far
" as I can. I am confident that the parliament
" never intended to impose contradictory oaths:
" Therefore I think no man can explain it but for
" himself. Accordingly, I take it as far as it is
" consistent with itself, and the protestant religion.
" And I do declare, that I mean not to bind my-
" self, in my station, and in a lawful way, from
" wishing, and endeavouring any alteration, which
" I think to the advantage of church or state, and
" not repugnant to the protestant religion and my
" loyalty: And this I understand as a part of my
" oath." The duke, as was natural, heard these words with great tranquillity: No one took the least offence: Argyle was admitted to sit that day in council: And it was impossible to imagine, that a capital offence had been committed, where occasion seemed not to have been given, so much as for a frown or reprimand.

ARGYLE was much surprised, a few days after, to find that a warrant was issued for committing him to prison; that he was indicted for high-treason, leasing-making, and perjury; and that from these innocent words an accusation was extracted, by which he was to forfeit honours, life, and fortune. It is needless to enter into particulars, where the iniquity of the whole is so apparent. Though the sword of justice was displayed, even her semblance was not put on; and the forms alone of law were preserved, in order to sanctify, or rather aggravate, the oppression. Of five judges, three did not scruple to find the guilt of treason and leasing-making to be incurred by the prisoner: A jury of fifteen noblemen gave verdict against him: And the king, being consulted, ordered the sentence to be pronounced; but the execution of it to be suspended till farther orders.

IT was pretended by the duke and his creatures, that Argyle's life and fortune were not in any danger, and

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and that the ſole reaſon for puſhing the trial to ſuch extremities againſt him was in order to make him renounce ſome hereditary juriſdictions, which gave his family a dangerous authority in the highlands, and obſtructed the courſe of public juſtice. But allowing the end to be juſtifiable, the means were infamous; and ſuch as were incompatible, not only with a free, but a civilized government. Argyle had therefore no reaſon to truſt any longer to the juſtice or mercy of ſuch enemies: He made his eſcape from priſon; and till he ſhould find a ſhip for Holland, he concealed himſelf during ſome time in London. The king heard of his lurking-place, but would not allow him to be arreſted [1]. All the parts, however, of his ſentence, as far as the government in Scotland had power, were rigorouſly executed; his eſtate confiſcated, his arms reverſed and torn.

State of affairs in Scotland.

It would ſeem, that the genuine paſſion for liberty was at this time totally extinguiſhed in Scotland: There was only preſerved a ſpirit of mutiny and ſedition, encouraged by a miſtaken zeal for religion. Cameron and Cargil, two furious preachers, went a ſtep beyond all their brethren: They publicly excommunicated the king for his tyranny and his breach of the covenant; and they renounced all allegiance to him. Cameron was killed by the troops in an action at Airs-Moſs; Cargil was taken and hanged. Many of their followers were tried and convicted. Their lives were offered them if they would ſay, *God ſave the king:* But they would only agree to pray for his repentance. This obſtinacy was much inſiſted on as an apology for the rigours of the adminiſtration: But if duly conſidered, it will rather afford reaſon for a contrary inference. Such unhappy deluſion is an object rather of commiſeration than of anger: And it is almoſt impoſ-

[1] Burnet, vol. i. p. 522.

ſible

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ſible that men could have been carried to ſuch a degree of frenzy, unleſs provoked by a long train of violence and oppreſſion.

1682. As the king was maſter in England, and no longer dreaded the clamours of the country party, he permitted the duke to pay him a viſit; and was ſoon after prevailed on to allow of his return to England, and of his bearing a part in the adminiſtration. The duke went to Scotland, in order to bring up his family, and ſettle the government of that country; and he choſe to take his paſſage by ſea. The ſhip ſtruck on a ſand-bank, and was loſt: The duke eſcaped in the barge; and it is pretended that, while many perſons of rank and quality were drowned, and among the reſt Hyde, his brother-in-law, he was very careful to ſave ſeveral of his dogs and prieſts: For theſe two ſpecies of favourites are coupled together by ſome writers. It has likewiſe been aſſerted, that the barge might ſafely have held more perſons, and that ſome who ſwam to it were thruſt off, and even their hands cut, in order to diſengage them. But every action of every eminent perſon, during this period, is ſo liable to be miſinterpreted and miſrepreſented by faction, that we ought to be very cautious in paſſing judgment on too ſlight evidence. It is remarkable, that the ſailors on board the ſhip, though they felt themſelves ſinking, and ſaw inevitable death before their eyes, yet, as ſoon as they obſerved the duke to be in ſafety, gave a loud ſhout, in teſtimony of their joy and ſatisfaction.

The duke, during his abode in Scotland, had behaved with great civility towards the gentry and nobility; and by his courtly demeanor had much won upon their affections: But his treatment of the enthuſiaſts was ſtill ſomewhat rigorous; and in many inſtances he appeared to be a man of a ſevere, if not an unrelenting temper. It is even aſſerted, that he ſometimes aſſiſted at the torture of criminals, and looked

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looked on with tranquillity, as if he were conſidering ſome curious experiment[m]. He left the authority in the hands of the earl of Aberdeen, chancellor, and the earl of Queenſberry, treaſurer. A very arbitrary ſpirit appeared in their adminiſtration: A gentleman of the name of Weir was tried, becauſe he had kept company with one who had been in rebellion; though that perſon had never been marked out by proceſs or proclamation. The inferences upon which Weir was condemned (for a proſecution by the government and a condemnation were in Scotland the ſame thing) hung upon each other after the following manner: No man, it was ſuppoſed, could have been in a rebellion without being expoſed to ſuſpicion in the neighbourhood: If the neighbourhood had ſuſpected him, it was to be preſumed that each individual had likewiſe heard of the grounds of ſuſpicion: Every man was bound to declare to the government his ſuſpicion againſt every man, and to avoid the company of traitors: To fail in this duty was to participate in the treaſon: The concluſion on the whole was, You have converſed with a rebel; therefore you are yourſelf a rebel. A reprieve was, with ſome difficulty, procured for Weir; but it was ſeriouſly determined to make uſe of the precedent. Courts of judicature were erected in the ſouthern and weſtern counties, and a ſtrict inquiſition carried on againſt this new ſpecies of crime. The term of three years was appointed for the continuance of theſe courts; after which an indemnity was promiſed. Whoever would take the teſt, was inſtantly entitled to the benefit of this indemnity. The preſbyterians, alarmed with ſuch tyranny, from which no man could deem himſelf ſafe, began to think of leaving the country; and

[m] Burnet, vol. i p. 583. Wodrow, vol. ii. p. 169. This laſt author, who is much the better authority, mentions only one inſtance, that of Spreul, which ſeems to have been an extraordinary one.

ſome

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ſome of their agents were ſent to England, in order to treat with the proprietors of Carolina for a ſettlement in that colony. Any condition ſeemed preferable to the living in their native country, which, by the prevalence of perſecution and violence, was become as inſecure to them as a den of robbers.

ABOVE two thouſand perſons were outlawed on pretence of their converſing or having intercourſe with rebels[n], and they were continually hunted in their retreat by ſoldiers, ſpies, informers, and oppreſſive magiſtrates. It was uſual to put enſnaring queſtions to people living peaceably in their own houſes; ſuch as, "Will you renounce the cove-"nant? Do you eſteem the riſing at Bothwel to "be rebellion? Was the killing of the archbiſhop "of St. Andrews murder?" And when the poor deluded creatures refuſed to anſwer, capital puniſhments were inflicted on them[o]. Even women were brought to the gibbet for this pretended crime. A number of fugitives, rendered frantic by oppreſſion, had publiſhed a ſeditious declaration; renouncing allegiance to Charles Stuart, whom they called, as they, for their parts, had indeed ſome reaſon to eſteem him, a tyrant. This incident afforded the privy council a pretence for an unuſual kind of oppreſſion. Soldiers were diſperſed over the country, and power was given to all commiſſion-officers, even the loweſt, to oblige every one they met with to abjure the declaration; and upon refuſal, inſtantly, without farther queſtions, to ſhoot the delinquent[p]. It were endleſs, as well as ſhocking, to enumerate all the inſtances of perſecution, or, in other words, of abſurd tyranny, which at that time prevailed in Scotland. One of them, however, is ſo ſingular, that I cannot forbear relating it.

[n] Wodrow, vol. ii. Appendix, 94.
[o] Ibid. vol. ii. paſſim.
[p] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 434.

THREE

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THREE women were ſeized [9]; and the cuſtomary oath was tendered to them, by which they were to abjure the ſeditious declaration above mentioned. They all refuſed, and were condemned to a capital puniſhment by drowning. One of them was an elderly woman: The other two were young; one eighteen years of age, the other only thirteen. Even theſe violent perſecutors were aſhamed to put the youngeſt to death: But the other two were conducted to the place of execution, and were tied to ſtakes within the ſea-mark at low water: A contrivance which rendered their death lingering and dreadful. The elderly woman was placed fartheſt in, and by the riſing of the waters was firſt ſuffocated. The younger, partly terrified with the view of her companion's death, partly ſubdued by the entreaty of her friends, was prevailed with ſo ſay, *God ſave the king*. Immediately the ſpectators called out that ſhe had ſubmitted; and ſhe was looſened from the ſtake. Major Winram, the officer who guarded the execution, again required her to ſign the abjuration; and upon her refuſal, he ordered her inſtantly to be plunged in the water, where ſhe was ſuffocated.

THE ſeverity of the adminiſtration in Scotland is in part to be aſcribed to the duke's temper, to whom the king had conſigned over the government of that country, and who gave ſuch attention to affairs as to allow nothing of moment to eſcape him. Even the government of England, from the ſame cauſe, began to be ſomewhat infected with the ſame ſeverity. The duke's credit was great at court. Though neither ſo much beloved nor eſteemed as the king, he was more dreaded; and thence an attendance more exact, as well as a ſubmiſſion more obſequious, was paid to him. The ſaying of Waller was remarked, that Charles, in ſpite to the parliament, who had determined that the duke ſhould

[9] Wodrow, vol. ii. p. 505.

not

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not ſucceed him, was reſolved that he ſhould reign even in his lifetime.

THE king, however, who loved to maintain a balance in his councils, ſtill ſupported Halifax, whom he created a marquis, and made privy ſeal, though ever in oppoſition to the duke. This man, who poſſeſſed the fineſt genius and moſt extenſive capacity of all employed in public affairs during the preſent reign, affected a ſpecies of neutrality between the parties, and was eſteemed the head of that ſmall body known by the denomination of *Trimmers*. This conduct, which is more natural to men of integrity than of ambition, could not, however, procure him the former character; and he was always, with reaſon, regarded as an intriguer rather than a patriot. Sunderland, who had promoted the excluſion-bill, and who had been diſplaced on that account, was again, with the duke's conſent, brought into the adminiſtration. The extreme duplicity, at leaſt variableneſs, of this man's conduct, through the whole courſe of his life, made it be ſuſpected that it was by the king's direction he had mixed with the country party. Hyde, created earl of Rocheſter, was firſt commiſſioner of the treaſury, and was entirely in the duke's intereſts.

State of the miniſtry in England.

THE king himſelf was obliged to act as the head of a party; a diſagreeable ſituation for a prince, and always the ſource of much injuſtice and oppreſſion. He knew how obnoxious the diſſenters were to the church; and he reſolved, contrary to the maxims of toleration which he had hitherto ſupported in England, to gratify his friends by the perſecution of his enemies. The laws againſt conventicles were now rigorouſly executed; an expedient which, the king knew, would diminiſh neither the numbers nor influence of the nonconformiſts; and which is therefore to be deemed more the reſult of paſſion than of policy. Scarcely any

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any perſecution ſerves the intended purpoſe but ſuch as amounts to a total extermination.

THOUGH the king's authority made every day great advances, it ſtill met with conſiderable obſtacles, chiefly from the city, which was entirely in the hands of the malcontents. The juries, in particular, named by the ſheriffs, were not likely to be impartial judges between the crown and the people; and, after the experiments already made in the caſe of Shafteſbury and that of College, treaſon, it was apprehended, might there be committed with impunity. There could not therefore be a more important ſervice to the court than to put affairs upon a different footing. Sir John Moore, the mayor, was gained by ſecretary Jenkins, and encouraged to inſiſt upon the cuſtomary privilege of his office, of naming one of the ſheriffs. Accordingly, when the time of election came, he drank to North, a Levant merchant, who accepted of that expenſive office. The country party ſaid, that, being lately returned from Turkey, he was, on account of his recent experience, better qualified to ſerve the purpoſes of the court. A poll was opened for the election of another ſheriff; and here began the conteſt. The majority of the common-hall, headed by the two ſheriffs of the former year, refuſed to acknowledge the mayor's right of appointing one ſheriff, but inſiſted that both muſt be elected by the livery. Papillon and Dubois were the perſons whom the country party agreed to elect: Box was pointed out by the courtiers. The poll was opened; but as the mayor would not allow the election to proceed for two vacancies, the ſheriffs and he ſeparated, and each carried on the poll apart. The country party, who voted with the ſheriffs for Papillon and Dubois, were much more numerous than thoſe who voted with the mayor for Box: But as the mayor inſiſted,

New nomination of ſheriffs.

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inſiſted, that his poll was the only legal one, he declared Box to be duly elected. All difficulties, however, were not ſurmounted. Box, apprehenſive of the conſequences which might attend ſo dubious an election, fined off; and the mayor found it neceſſary to proceed to a new choice. When the matter was propoſed to the common-hall, a loud cry was raiſed, No election! No election! The two ſheriffs already elected, Papillon and Dubois, were inſiſted on as the only legal magiſtrates. But as the mayor ſtill maintained, that Box alone had been legally choſen, and that it was now requiſite to ſupply his place, he opened books anew; and during the tumult and confuſion of the citizens, a few of the mayor's partiſans elected Rich, unknown to and unheeded by the reſt of the livery. North and Rich were accordingly ſworn in ſheriffs for the enſuing year; but it was neceſſary to ſend a guard of the train bands to protect them in entering upon their office. A new mayor of the court party was ſoon after choſen, by means, as is pretended, ſtill more violent and irregular.

October 25.

THUS the country party were diſlodged from their ſtrong hold in the city; where, ever ſince the commencement of factions in the Engliſh government, they had, without interruption, almoſt without moleſtation, maintained a ſuperiority. It had been happy, had the partialities, hitherto objected to juries, been corrected, without giving place to partialities of an oppoſite kind: But in the preſent diſtracted ſtate of the nation, an equitable neutrality was almoſt impoſſible to be attained. The court and church party, who were now named on juries, made juſtice ſubſervient to their factious views; and the king had a proſpect of obtaining full revenge on his enemies. It was not long before the effects of theſe alterations were ſeen. When it was firſt reported,

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1682. that the duke intended to leave Scotland, Pilkington, at that time ſheriff, a very violent man, had broken out in theſe terms, "He has already burned "the city; and he is now coming to cut all our "throats!" For theſe ſcandalous expreſſions, the duke ſued Pilkington; and enormous damages, to the amount of 100,000 pounds, were decreed him. By the law of England, ratified in the great charter, no fines or damages ought to extend to the total ruin of a criminal. Sir Patience Ward, formerly mayor, who gave evidence for Pilkington, was ſued for perjury, and condemned to the pillory: A ſevere ſentence, and ſufficient to deter all witneſſes from appearing in favour of thoſe who were proſecuted by the court.

1683. But though the crown had obtained ſo great a victory in the city, it was not quite deciſive; and the conteſt might be renewed every year at the election of magiſtrates. An important project, therefore, was formed, not only to make the king maſter of the city, but by that precedent to gain him uncontrolled influence in all the corporations of England, and thereby give the greateſt wound to the legal conſtitution, which the moſt powerful and moſt arbitrary monarchs had ever yet been able to inflict. A writ of *quo warranto* was iſſued againſt the city; that is, an inquiry into the validity of its charter. It was pretended, that the city had forfeited all its privileges, and ought to be declared no longer a corporation, on account of two offences which the court of aldermen and common council had committed. After the great fire in 1666, all the markets had been rebuilt, and had been fitted up with many conveniences; and, in order to defray the expence, the magiſtrates had impoſed a ſmall toll on goods brought to market: In the year 1679, they had addreſſed the king againſt the prorogation

Quo warrantos.

of

of parliament, and had employed the following terms: "Your petitioners are greatly ſurpriſed at "the late prorogation, whereby the proſecution of "the public juſtice of the kingdom, and the mak- "ing of neceſſary proviſions for the preſervation of "your majeſty and your proteſtant ſubjects, have "received interruption." Theſe words were pretended to contain a ſcandalous reflection on the king and his meaſures. The cauſe of the city was defended againſt the attorney and ſolicitor generals, by Treby and Pollexfen.

THESE laſt pleaded that, ſince the foundation of the monarchy, no corporation had ever yet been expoſed to forfeiture, and the thing itſelf implied an abſurdity: That a corporation, as ſuch, was incapable of all crime or offence, and none were anſwerable for any iniquity but the perſons themſelves who committed it: That the members, in chooſing magiſtrates, had entruſted them with legal powers only; and where the magiſtrates exceeded theſe powers, their acts were void, but could never involve the body itſelf in any criminal imputation: That ſuch had ever been the practice of England, except at the reformation, when the monaſteries were aboliſhed; but this was an extraordinary caſe; and it was even thought neceſſary to ratify afterwards the whole tranſaction by act of parliament: That corporate bodies, framed for public good, and calculated for perpetual duration, ought not to be annihilated for the temporary faults of their members, who might themſelves, without hurting the community, be queſtioned for their offences: That even a private eſtate, if entailed, could not be forfeited to the crown, on account of treaſon committed by the tenant for life; but upon his demiſe went to the next in remainder: That the offences, objected to the city, far from deſerving ſo ſevere a puniſhment, were not even worthy of the ſmalleſt repre-

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henſion. That all corporations were inveſted with the power of making bye-laws; and the ſmalleſt borough in England had ever been allowed to carry the exerciſe of this power farther than London had done in the inſtance complained of: That the city, having, at its own expence, repaired the markets, which were built too on its own eſtate, might as lawfully claim a ſmall recompenſe from ſuch as brought commodities thither, as a man might require rent for a houſe, of which he was poſſeſſed. That thoſe who diſliked the condition might abſtain from the market; and whoever paid had done it voluntarily: That it was an avowed right of the ſubjects to petition; nor had the city in their addreſs abuſed this privilege: That the king himſelf had often declared, the parliament often voted, the nation to be in danger from the popiſh plot; which, it is evident, could not be fully proſecuted but in a parliamentary manner: That the impeachment of the popiſh lords was certainly obſtructed by the frequent prorogations; as was alſo the enacting of neceſſary laws, and providing for the defence of the nation: That the loyalty of the city, no leſs than their regard to ſelf-preſervation, might prompt them to frame the petition; ſince it was acknowledged, that the king's life was every moment expoſed to the moſt imminent danger from the popiſh conſpiracy: That the city had not accuſed the king of obſtructing juſtice, much leſs of having any ſuch intention; ſince it was allowed, that evil counſellors were alone anſwerable for all the pernicious conſequences of any meaſure: And that it was unaccountable, that two public deeds which had not, during ſo long a time, ſubjected to any, even the ſmalleſt penalty, the perſons guilty of them, ſhould now be puniſhed ſo ſeverely upon the corporation, which always was, and always muſt be innocent.

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1683. 12th June.

IT is evident, that thoſe who would apologiſe for the meaſures of the court, muſt, in this caſe, found their arguments, not on law, but reaſons of ſtate. The judges, therefore, who condemned the city, are inexcuſable; ſince the ſole object of their determinations muſt ever be the pure principles of juſtice and equity. But the office of judge was at that time held during pleaſure; and it was impoſſible that any cauſe, where the court bent its force, could ever be carried againſt it. After ſentence was pronounced, the city applied in a humble manner to the king; and he agreed to reſtore their charter, but in return they were obliged to ſubmit to the following regulations: That no mayor, ſheriff, recorder, common ſerjeant, town clerk, or coroner, ſhould be admitted to the exerciſe of his office without his majeſty's approbation: That if the king diſapprove twice of the mayor or ſheriffs elected, he may by commiſſion appoint theſe magiſtrates: That the mayor and court of aldermen may, with his majeſty's leave, diſplace any magiſtrate: And that no alderman, in caſe of a vacancy, ſhall be elected without conſent of the court of aldermen, who, if they diſapprove twice of the choice, may fill the vacancy.

Great power of the crown.

ALL the corporations in England, having the example of London before their eyes, ſaw how vain it would prove to contend with the court, and were, moſt of them, ſucceſſively induced to ſurrender their charters into the king's hands. Conſiderable ſums were exacted for reſtoring the charters; and all offices of power and profit were left at the diſpoſal of the crown. It ſeems ſtrange, that the independent royaliſts, who never meant to make the crown abſolute, ſhould yet be ſo elated with the victory obtained over their adverſaries, as to approve of a precedent, which left no national privileges in ſecurity, but enabled the king under like pretences, and by means of like inſtruments, to

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recall anew all thoſe charters, which at preſent he was pleaſed to grant. And every friend to liberty muſt allow, that the nation, whoſe conſtitution was thus broken in the ſhock of faction, had a right, by every prudent expedient, to recover that ſecurity of which it was ſo unhappily bereaved.

WHILE ſo great a faction adhered to the crown, it is apparent, that reſiſtance, however juſtifiable, could never be prudent; and all wiſe men ſaw no expedient but peaceably to ſubmit to the preſent grievances. There was, however, a party of malcontents, ſo turbulent in their diſpoſition, that, even before this laſt iniquity, which laid the whole conſtitution at the mercy of the king, they had meditated plans of reſiſtance; at a time when it could be as little juſtifiable as prudent. In the ſpring 1681[r], a little before the Oxford parliament, the king was ſeized with a fit of ſickneſs at Windſor, which gave great alarm to the public. The duke of Monmouth, lord Ruſſel, lord Grey, inſtigated by the reſtleſs Shafteſbury, had agreed, in caſe the king's ſickneſs ſhould prove mortal, to riſe in arms, and to oppoſe the ſucceſſion of the duke. Charles recovered; but theſe dangerous projects were not laid aſide. The ſame conſpirators, together with Eſſex and Saliſbury, were determined to continue the Oxford parliament, after the king, as was daily expected, ſhould diſſolve it; and they engaged ſome leaders among the commons in the ſame deſperate meaſure. They went ſo far as to detain ſeveral lords in the houſe, under pretence of ſigning a proteſt againſt rejecting Fitz-harris's impeach-

A conſpiracy.

[r] Lord Grey's Secret Hiſtory of the Rye-houſe plot. This is the moſt full and authentic account of all theſe tranſactions; but is in the main confirmed by biſhop Sprat, and even Burnet, as well as by the trials and dying confeſſions of the conſpirators: So that nothing can be more unaccounable than that any one ſhould pretend that this conſpiracy was an impoſture like the popiſh plot. Monmouth's declaration publiſhed in the next reign, confeſſes a conſult for extraordinary remedies.

ment:

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ment: But hearing that the commons had broken up in great conſternation, they were likewiſe obliged at laſt to ſeparate. Shafteſbury's impriſonment and trial put an end for ſome time to theſe machinations; and it was not till the new ſheriffs were impoſed on the city that they were revived. The leaders of the country party began then to apprehend themſelves in imminent danger; and they were well pleaſed to find that the citizens were ſtruck with the ſame terror, and were thence inclined to undertake the moſt perilous enterpriſes. Beſides the city, the gentry and nobility in ſeveral counties of England were ſolicited to riſe in arms. Monmouth engaged the earl of Macclesfield, lord Brandon, ſir Gilbert Gerrard, and other gentlemen in Cheſhire; lord Ruſſel fixed a correſpondence with ſir William Courtney, ſir Francis Rowes, ſir Francis Drake, who promiſed to raiſe the weſt; and Trenchard in particular, who had intereſt in the diſaffected town of Taunton, aſſured him of conſiderable aſſiſtance from that neighbourhood. Shafteſbury, and his emiſſary Ferguſon, an independent clergyman, and a reſtleſs plotter, managed the correſpondence in the city, upon which the confederates chiefly relied. The whole train was ready to take fire; but was prevented by the caution of lord Ruſſel, who induced Monmouth to delay the enterprize. Shafteſbury, in the mean time, was ſo much affected with the ſenſe of his danger, that he had left his houſe, and ſecretly lurked in the city; meditating all thoſe deſperate ſchemes, which diſappointed revenge and ambition could inſpire. He exclaimed loudly againſt delay, and repreſented to his confederates, that having gone ſo far, and entruſted the ſecret into ſo many hands, there was no ſafety for them but in a bold and deſperate proſecution of their purpoſe. The projects were therefore renewed: Meetings of the conſpirators were appointed in different houſes, particularly in Shephard's,

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hard's, an eminent wine merchant in the city: The plan of an inſurrection was laid in London, Cheſhire, Devonſhire, and Briſtol: The ſeveral places of rendezvous were concerted; and all the operations fixed: The ſtate of the guards was even viewed by Monmouth and Armſtrong, and an attack on them pronounced practicable: A declaration to juſtify the enterpriſe to the public was read and agreed to: And every circumſtance ſeemed now to render an inſurrection unavoidable; when a new delay was procured by Trenchard, who declared, that the riſing in the weſt could not for ſome weeks be in ſufficient forwardneſs.

SHAFTESBURY was enraged at theſe perpetual cautions and delays in an enterpriſe which, he thought, nothing but courage and celerity could render effectual: He threatened to commence the inſurrection with his friends in the city alone; and he boaſted, that he had ten thouſand *briſk boys*, as he called them, who, on a motion of his finger, were ready to fly to arms. Monmouth, Ruſſel, and the other conſpirators, were, during ſome time, in apprehenſions leſt deſpair ſhould puſh him into ſome dangerous meaſure; when they heard that, after a long combat between fear and rage, he had at laſt abandoned all hopes of ſucceſs, and had retired into Holland. He lived in a private manner at Amſterdam; and for greater ſecurity deſired to be admitted into the magiſtracy of that city: But his former violent counſels againſt the Dutch commonwealth were remembered; and all applications from him were rejected. He died ſoon after; and his end gave neither ſorrow to his friends, nor joy to his enemies. His furious temper, notwithſtanding his capacity, had done great injury to the cauſe in which he was engaged. The violences and iniquities which he ſuggeſted and encouraged, were greater than even faction itſelf could endure; and men could not forbear

Shafteſbury retires and dies.

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forbear ſometimes recollecting, that the ſame perſon, who had become ſo zealous a patriot, was once a moſt proſtitute courtier. It is remarkable, that this man, whoſe principles and conduct were, in all other reſpects, ſo exceptionable, proved an excellent chancellor; and that all his decrees, while he poſſeſſed that high office, were equally remarkable for juſtneſs and for integrity. So difficult is it to find in hiſtory a character either wholly bad or perfectly good; though the prejudices of party make writers run eaſily into the extremes both of panegyric and of ſatire!

After Shateſbury's departure, the conſpirators found ſome difficulty in renewing the correſpondence with the city malcontents, who had been accuſtomed to depend ſolely on that nobleman. Their common hopes, however, as well as common fears, made them at laſt have recourſe to each other; and a regular project of an inſurrection was then formed. A council of ſix was erected, conſiſting of Monmouth, Ruſſel, Eſſex, Howard, Algernon Sidney, and John Hambden, grandſon of the great parliamentary leader. Theſe men entered into an agreement with Argyle and the Scottiſh malcontents; who engaged, that, upon the payment of 10,000 pounds for the purchaſe of arms in Holland, they would bring the covenanters into the field. Inſurrections, likewiſe, were anew projected in Cheſhire, and the weſt, as well as in the city; and ſome meetings of the leaders were held, in order to reduce theſe projects into form. The conſpirators differed extremely in their views. Sidney was paſſionate for a commonwealth. Eſſex had embraced the ſame project. But Monmouth had entertained hopes of acquiring the crown for himſelf. Ruſſel, as well as Hambden, was much attached to the ancient conſtitution, and intended only the excluſion of the duke, and the redreſs of grievances. Lord Howard was a man of no principle, and was ready to embrace

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brace any party which his immediate intereſt ſhould recommend to him. But notwithſtanding this difference of characters and of views, their common hatred of the duke and the preſent adminiſtration united them in one party; and the dangerous experiment of an inſurrection was fully reſolved on.

Rye-houſe plot.

WHILE theſe ſchemes were concerting among the leaders, there was an inferior order of conſpirators, who held frequent meetings; and, together with the inſurrection, carried on projects quite unknown to Monmouth and the cabal of ſix. Among theſe men were colonel Rumſey, an old republican officer, who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in Portugal, and had been recommended to the king by mareſchal Schomberg; lieutenant-colonel Walcot, likewiſe a republican officer; Goodenough, underſheriff of London, a zealous and noted party-man; Weſt, Tyley, Norton, Ayloffe, lawyers; Ferguſon, Rouſe, Hone, Keiling, Holloway, Bourne, Lee, Rumbald. Moſt of theſe laſt were merchants or tradeſmen; and the only perſons of this confederacy, who had acceſs to the leaders of the party, were Rumſey and Ferguſon. When theſe men met together, they indulged themſelves in the moſt deſperate and moſt criminal diſcourſe: They frequently mentioned the aſſaſſination of the king and the duke, to which they had given the familiar appellation of *lopping*: They even went ſo far as to have thought of a ſcheme for that purpoſe. Rumbald, who was a maltſter, poſſeſſed a farm, called the Ryehouſe, which lay on the road to Newmarket, whither the king commonly went once a-year, for the diverſion of the races. A plan of this farm had been laid before ſome of the conſpirators by Rumbald, who ſhowed them how eaſy it would be, by overturning a cart, to ſtop at that place the king's coach; while they might fire upon him from the hedges, and be enabled afterwards, through bye-lanes and croſs the fields, to make their

their eſcape. But though the plauſibility of this ſcheme gave great pleaſure to the conſpirators, no concerted deſign was as yet laid, nor any men, horſes, or arms, provided: The whole was little more than looſe diſcourſe, the overflowings of their zeal and rancour. The houſe, in which the king lived at Newmarket, took fire accidentally; and he was obliged to leave that place eight days ſooner than he intended. To this circumſtance his ſafety was afterwards aſcribed, when the conſpiracy was detected; and the court party could not ſufficiently admire the wiſe diſpenſations of Providence. It is indeed certain, that as the king had thus unexpectedly left Newmarket, he was worſe attended than uſual; and Rumbald informed his confederates with regret, what a fine opportunity was thus unfortunately loſt. CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

Among the conſpirators I have mentioned Keiling, a ſalter in London. This man had been engaged in a bold meaſure, of arreſting the mayor of London, at the ſuit of Papillon and Dubois, the outed ſheriffs; and being liable to proſecution for that action, he thought it ſafeſt to purchaſe a pardon, by revealing the conſpiracy, in which he was deeply concerned. He brought to ſecretary Jenkins intelligence of the aſſaſſination plot; but as he was a ſingle evidence, the ſecretary, whom many falſe plots had probably rendered incredulous, ſcrupled to iſſue warrants for the commitment of ſo great a number of perſons. Keiling, therefore, in order to fortify his teſtimony, engaged his brother in treaſonable diſcourſe with Goodenough, one of the conſpirators; and Jenkins began now to give more attention to the intelligence. The conſpirators had got ſome hint of the danger, in which they were involved; and all of them concealed themſelves. One perſon alone, of the name of Barber, an inſtrument maker, was ſeized; and as his confeſſion concurred in Conſpiracy diſcovered. June 12.

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in many particulars with Keiling's information, the affair ſeemed to be put out of all queſtion; and a more diligent ſearch was every where made after the conſpirators.

West, the lawyer, and colonel Rumſey, finding the perils to which they were expoſed in endeavouring to eſcape, reſolved to ſave their own lives at the expence of their companions; and they ſurrendered themſelves with an intention of becoming evidence. Weſt could do little more than confirm the teſtimony of Keiling with regard to the aſſaſſination plot; but Rumſey, beſides giving additional confirmation of the ſame deſign, was at laſt, though with much difficulty, led to reveal the meetings at Shephard's. Shephard was immediately apprehended; and had not courage to maintain fidelity to his confederates. Upon his information, orders were iſſued for arreſting the great men engaged in the conſpiracy. Monmouth abſconded: Ruſſel was ſent to the Tower: Gray was arreſted, but eſcaped from the meſſenger: Howard was taken, while he concealed himſelf in a chimney; and being a man of profligate morals, as well as indigent circumſtances, he ſcrupled not, in hopes of a pardon and a reward, to reveal the whole conſpiracy. Eſſex, Sidney, and Hambden, were immediately apprehended upon his evidence. Every day ſome of the conſpirators were detected in their lurking-places, and thrown into priſon.

Execution of the conſpirators.

Lieutenant-colonel Walcot was firſt brought to his trial. This man, who was once noted for bravery, had been ſo far overcome by the love of life, that he had written to ſecretary Jenkins, and had offered, upon promiſe of pardon, to turn evidence: But no ſooner had he taken this mean ſtep, than he felt more generous ſentiments ariſe in him; and he endeavoured, though in vain, to conceal himſelf. The witneſſes againſt him were Rumſey, Weſt,

Weſt, Shephard, together with Bourne, a brewer. His own letter to the ſecretary was produced, and rendered the teſtimony of the witneſſes unqueſtionable. Hone and Rouſe were alſo condemned. Theſe two men, as well as Walcot, acknowledged, at their execution, the juſtice of the ſentence; and from their trial and confeſſion, it is ſufficiently apparent, that the plan of an inſurrection had been regularly formed; and that even the aſſaſſination had been often talked of, and not without the approbation of many of the conſpirators.

Trial of lord Ruſſel.

THE condemnation of theſe criminals was probably intended as a preparative to the trial of lord Ruſſel, and ſerved to impreſs the public with a thorough belief of the conſpiracy, as well as a horror againſt it. The witneſſes produced againſt the noble priſoner, were Rumſey, Shephard, and lord Howard. Rumſey ſwore, that he himſelf had been introduced at the cabal at Shephard's, where Ruſſel was preſent; and had delivered them a meſſage from Shafteſbury, urging them to haſten the intended inſurrection: But had received for anſwer, that it was found neceſſary to delay the deſign, and that Shafteſbury muſt therefore, for ſome time, reſt contented. This anſwer, he ſaid, was delivered by Ferguſon; but was aſſented to by the priſoner. He added, that ſome diſcourſe had been entered into about taking a ſurvey of the guards; and he thought that Monmouth, Gray, and Armſtrong, undertook to view them. Shephard depoſed, that his houſe had beforehand been beſpoken by Ferguſon for the ſecret meeting of the conſpirators, and that he had been careful to keep all his ſervants from approaching them, and had ſerved them himſelf. Their diſcourſe, he ſaid, ran chiefly upon the means of ſurpriſing the guards; and it was agreed, that Monmouth and his two friends ſhould take a ſurvey of them. The report, which they brought next meeting, was,

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that the guards were remiſs, and that the deſign was practicable: But he did not affirm that any reſolution was taken of executing it. The priſoner, he thought, was preſent at both theſe meetings; but he was ſure that at leaſt he was preſent at one of them. A declaration, he added, had been read by Ferguſon in Ruſſel's preſence: The reaſons of the intended inſurrection were there ſet forth, and all the public grievances fully diſplayed.

Lord Howard had been one of the cabal of ſix, eſtabliſhed after Shafteſbury's flight; and two meetings had been held by the conſpirators, one at Hambden's, another at Ruſſel's. Howard depoſed, that, at the firſt meeting, it was agreed to begin the inſurrection in the country before the city; the places were fixed, the proper quantity and kind of arms agreed on, and the whole plan of operations concerted: That at the ſecond meeting, the converſation chiefly turned upon their correſpondence with Argyle and the diſcontented Scots, and that the principal management of that affair was entruſted to Sidney, who had ſent one Aaron Smith into Scotland with proper inſtructions. He added, that in theſe deliberations no queſtion was put, or votes collected; but there was no contradiction; and, as he took it, all of them, and the priſoner among the reſt, gave their conſent.

Rumsey and Shephard were very unwilling witneſſes againſt lord Ruſſel; and it appears from Gray's Secret Hiſtory[s], that, if they had pleaſed, they could have given a more explicit teſtimony againſt him. This reluctance, together with the difficulty in recollecting circumſtances of a converſation, which had paſſed above eight months before, and which the perſons had not at that time any intention to reveal, may beget ſome ſlight objection to their evidence. But on the whole, it was undoubtedly

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2 proved,

proved, that the inſurrection had been deliberated on by the priſoner, and fully reſolved; the ſurpriſal of the guards deliberated on, but not fully reſolved; and that an aſſaſſination had never once been mentioned nor imagined by him. So far the matter of fact ſeems certain: But ſtill, with regard to law, there remained a difficulty, and that of an important nature.

THE Engliſh laws of treaſon, both in the manner of defining that crime, and in the proof required, are the mildeſt and moſt indulgent, and conſequently the moſt equitable, that are any where to be found. The two chief ſpecies of treaſon, contained in the ſtatute of Edward III. are the compaſſing and intending of the king's death, and the actually levying of war againſt him; and by the law of Mary, the crime muſt be proved by the concurring teſtimony of two witneſſes, to ſome overt act, tending to theſe purpoſes. But the lawyers, partly deſirous of paying court to the ſovereign, partly convinced of ill conſequences which might attend ſuch narrow limitations, had introduced a greater latitude, both in the proof and definition of the crime. It was not required that the two witneſſes ſhould teſtify the ſame preciſe overt act: It was ſufficient, that they both teſtified ſome overt act of the ſame treaſon; and though this evaſion may ſeem a ſubtilty, it had long prevailed in the courts of judicature, and had at laſt been ſolemnly fixed by parliament at the trial of lord Stafford. The lawyers had uſed the ſame freedom with the law of Edward III. They had obſerved, that, by that ſtatute, if a man ſhould enter into a conſpiracy for a rebellion, ſhould even fix a correſpondence with foreign powers for that purpoſe, ſhould provide arms and money, yet, if he were detected and no rebellion enſued, he could not be tried for treaſon. To prevent this inconvenience, which it had been better to remedy by a new law, they had commonly laid their indictment for

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1683. for intending the death of the king, and had produced the intention of rebellion as a proof of that other intention. But though this form of indictment and trial was very frequent, and many criminals had received ſentence upon it, it was ſtill conſidered as ſomewhat irregular, and was plainly confounding, by a ſophiſm, two ſpecies of treaſon, which the ſtatute had accurately diſtinguiſhed. What made this refinement ſtill more exceptionable was, that a law had paſſed ſoon after the reſtoration; in which the conſulting or the intending of a rebellion was, during Charles's lifetime, declared treaſon; and it was required, that the proſecution ſhould be commenced within ſix months after the crime was committed. But notwithſtanding this ſtatute, the lawyers had perſevered, as they ſtill do perſevere, in the old form of indictment; and both ſir Harry Vane, and Oliver Plunket, titular primate of Ireland, had been tried by it. Such was the general horror, entertained againſt the old republicans and the popiſh conſpirators, that no one had murmured againſt this interpretation of the ſtatute; and the lawyers thought that they might follow the precedent, even in the caſe of the popular and beloved lord Ruſſel. Ruſſel's crime fell plainly within the ſtatute of Charles the IId; but the facts ſworn to by Rumſey and Shephard were beyond the ſix months required by law, and to the other facts Howard was a ſingle witneſs. To make the indictment, therefore, more extenſive, the intention of murdering the king was comprehended in it; and for proof of this intention the conſpiracy for raiſing a rebellion was aſſigned; and what ſeemed to bring the matter ſtill nearer, the deſign of attacking the king's guards.

Russel perceived this irregularity, and deſired to have the point argued by counſel: The chief juſtice told him, that this favour could not be granted, unleſs

unleſs he previouſly confeſſed the facts charged upon him. The artifical confounding of the two ſpecies of treaſon, though a practice ſupported by many precedents, is the chief, but not the only hardſhip, of which Ruſſel had reaſon to complain on his trial. His defence was feeble; and he contented himſelf with proteſting, that he never had entertained any deſign againſt the life of the king: His veracity would not allow him to deny the conſpiracy for an inſurrection. The jury were men of fair and reputable characters, but zealous royaliſts: After a ſhort deliberation, they brought in the priſoner guilty. CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

APPLICATIONS were made to the king for a pardon: Even money, to the amount of a hundred thouſand pounds, was offered to the dutcheſs of Portſmouth by the old earl of Bedford, father to Ruſſel. The king was inexorable. He had been extremely haraſſed with the violence of the country party; and he had obſerved, that the priſoner, beſides his ſecret deſigns, had always been carried to the higheſt extremity of oppoſition in parliament. Ruſſel had even adopted a ſentiment, ſimilar to what we meet with in a letter of the younger Brutus. Had his father, he ſaid, adviſed the king to reject the excluſion-bill, he would be the firſt to move for a parliamentary impeachment againſt him. When ſuch determined reſolution was obſerved, his popularity, his humanity, his juſtice, his very virtues became ſo many crimes, and were uſed as arguments againſt ſparing him. Charles therefore would go no farther than remitting the more ignonimious part of the ſentence, which the law requires to be pronounced againſt traitors. "Lord Ruſſel," ſaid he, "ſhall find, that I am poſſeſſed of that prerogative, "which, in the caſe of lord Stafford, he thought "proper to deny me." As the fury of the country party had rendered it impoſſible for the king, without the imminent danger of his crown, to pardon

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ſo many catholics, whom he firmly believed innocent, and even affectionate and loyal to him; he probably thought, that, ſince the edge of the law was now ready to fall upon that party themſelves, they could not reaſonably expect that he would interpoſe to ſave them.

Russel's conſort, a woman of virtue, daughter and heir of the good earl of Southampton, threw herſelf at the king's feet, and pleaded with many tears the merits and loyalty of her father, as an atonement for thoſe errors, into which honeſt, however miſtaken, principles had ſeduced her huſband. Theſe ſupplications were the laſt inſtance of female weakneſs (if they deſerve the name) which ſhe betrayed. Finding all applications vain, ſhe collected courage, and not only fortified herſelf againſt the fatal blow, but endeavoured by her example to ſtrengthen the reſolution of her unfortunate lord. With a tender and decent compoſure they took leave of each other on the day of his execution. "The bitterneſs of death is now paſt," ſaid he, when he turned from her. Lord Cavendiſh had lived in the cloſeſt intimacy with Ruſſel, and deſerted not his friend in the preſent calamity. He offered to manage his eſcape, by changing clothes with him, and remaining at all hazards in his place. Ruſſel refuſed to ſave his own life, by an expedient which might expoſe his friend to ſo many hardſhips. When the duke of Monmouth by meſſage offered to ſurrender himſelf, if Ruſſel thought that this meaſure would any-wiſe contribute to his ſafety; "It "will be no advantage to me," he ſaid, "to have "my friends die with me." Some of his expreſſions diſcover, not only compoſure, but good humour in this melancholy extremity. The day before his execution he was ſeized with a bleeding at the noſe. "I ſhall not now let blood to divert this "diſtemper," ſaid he to doctor Burnet who attended him; "that will be done to-morrow." A little before

fore the ſheriffs conducted him to the ſcaffold, he wound up his watch, "Now I have done," ſaid he, "with time, and henceforth muſt think ſolely of "eternity." CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

THE ſcaffold was erected in Lincoln's Inn Fields, a place diſtant from the Tower; and it was probably intended, by conducting Ruſſel through ſo many ſtreets, to ſhow the mutinous city their beloved leader, once the object of all their confidence, now expoſed to the utmoſt rigours of the law. As he was the moſt popular among his own party; ſo was he ever the leaſt obnoxious to the oppoſite faction: And his melancholy fate united every heart, ſenſible of humanity, in a tender compaſſion for him. Without the leaſt change of countenance, he laid his head on the block; and at two ſtrokes, it was ſevered from his body. July 21. and execution.

IN the ſpeech, which he delivered to the ſheriffs, he was very anxious to clear his memory from any imputation of ever intending the king's death, or any alteration in the government: He could not explicitly confeſs the projected inſurrection without hurting his friends, who might ſtill be called in queſtion for it; but he did not purge himſelf of that deſign, which, in the preſent condition of the nation, he regarded as no crime. By many paſſages in his ſpeech he ſeems to the laſt to have lain under the influence of party zeal; a paſſion which, being nouriſhed by a ſocial temper, and clothing itſelf under the appearance of principle, it is almoſt impoſſible for a virtuous man, who has acted in public life, ever thoroughly to eradicate. He profeſſed his entire belief in the popiſh plot: And he ſaid, that, though he had often heard the ſeizure of the guards mentioned, he had ever diſapproved of that attempt. To which he added, that the maſſacring of ſo many innocent men in cool blood was ſo like a popiſh practice, that he could not but abhor it. Upon the whole, the integrity and virtuous inten-

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tions, rather than the capacity, of this unfortunate nobleman, ſeem to have been the ſhining parts of his character.

1683. Trial of Algernon Sidney.

ALGERNON SIDNEY was next brought to his trial. This gallant perſon, ſon of the earl of Leiceſter, had entered deeply into the war againſt the late king; and though nowiſe tainted with enthuſiaſm, he had ſo far ſhared in all the counſels of the independent republican party, as to have been named on the high court of juſtice, which tried and condemned that monarch: He thought not proper, however, to take his ſeat among the judges. He ever oppoſed Cromwel's uſurpation with zeal and courage; and after making all efforts againſt the reſtoration, he reſolved to take no benefit of the general indemnity, but choſe voluntary baniſhment, rather than ſubmit to a government and family which he abhorred. As long as the republican party had any exiſtence, he was active in every ſcheme, however unpromiſing, which tended to promote their cauſe: But at length, in 1677, finding it neceſſary for his private affairs to return to England, he had applied for the king's pardon, and had obtained it. When the factions, ariſing from the popiſh plot, began to run high, Sidney, full of thoſe ideas of liberty, which he had imbibed from the great examples of antiquity, joined the popular party; and was even willing to ſeek a ſecond time, through all the horrors of civil war, for his adored republic.

FROM this imperfect ſketch of the character and conduct of this ſingular perſonage, it may eaſily be conceived how obnoxious he was become to the court and miniſtry: What alone renders them blameable was the illegal method which they took for effecting their purpoſe againſt him. On Sidney's trial they produced a great number of witneſſes, who proved the reality of a plot in general; and when the priſoner exclaimed, that all theſe evidences

ſaid

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ſaid nothing of him, he was anſwered, that this method of proceeding, however irregular, had been practiſed in the proſecutions of the popiſh conſpirators; a topic more fit to condemn one party than to juſtify the other. The only witneſs who depoſed againſt Sidney, was lord Howard; but as the law required two witneſſes, a ſtrange expedient was fallen on to ſupply this deficiency. In ranſacking the priſoner's cloſet, ſome diſcourſes on government were found; in which he had maintained principles, favourable indeed to liberty, but ſuch as the beſt and moſt dutiful ſubjects in all ages have been known to embrace; the original contract, the ſource of power from a conſent of the people, the lawfulneſs of reſiſting tyrants, the preference of liberty to the government of a ſingle perſon. Theſe papers were aſſerted to be equivalent to a ſecond witneſs, and even to many witneſſes. The priſoner replied, that there was no other reaſon for aſcribing theſe papers to him as the author, beſides a ſimilitude of hand; a proof which was never admitted in criminal proſecutions: That allowing him to be the author, he had compoſed them ſolely for his private amuſement, and had never publiſhed them to the world, or even communicated them to any ſingle perſon: That, when examined, they appeared, by the colour of the ink, to have been written many years before, and were in vain produced as evidence of a preſent conſpiracy againſt the government: And that where the law poſitively requires two witneſſes, one witneſs, attended with the moſt convincing circumſtances, could never ſuffice; much leſs, when ſupported by a circumſtance ſo weak and precarious. All theſe arguments, though urged by the priſoner with great courage and pregnancy of reaſon, had no influence. The violent and inhuman Jefferies was now chief juſtice; and by his direction a partial jury was eaſily prevailed on to give verdict againſt Sidney.

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1683. Dec. 17. His execution.

His execution followed a few days after: He complained, and with reaſon, of the iniquity of the ſentence; but he had too much greatneſs of mind to deny thoſe conſpiracies with Monmouth and Ruſſel, in which he had been engaged. He rather gloried, that he now ſuffered for that *good old cauſe*, in which, from his earlieſt youth, he ſaid, he had inliſted himſelf.

THE execution of Sidney is regarded as one of the greateſt blemiſhes of the preſent reign. The evidence againſt him, it muſt be confeſſed, was not legal; and the jury, who condemned him, were, for that reaſon, very blameable. But that after ſentence paſſed by a court of judicature, the king ſhould interpoſe and pardon a man, who, though otherwiſe poſſeſſed of merit, was undoubtedly guilty, who had ever been a moſt inflexible and moſt inverate enemy to the royal family, and who lately had even abuſed the king's clemency, might be an act of heroic generoſity, but can never be regarded as a neceſſary and indiſpenſable duty.

HOWARD was alſo the ſole evidence againſt Hambden; and his teſtimony was not ſupported by any material circumſtance. The crown-lawyers therefore found it in vain to try the priſoner for treaſon: They laid the indictment only for a miſdemeanour, and obtained ſentence againſt him. The fine impoſed was exorbitant; no leſs than forty thouſand pounds.

HOLLOWAY, a merchant of Briſtol, one of the conſpirators, had fled to the Weſt-Indies, and was now brought over. He had been outlawed; but the year allowed him for ſurrendering himſelf was not expired. A trial was therefore offered him: But as he had at firſt confeſſed his being engaged in a conſpiracy for an inſurrection, and even allowed that he had heard ſome diſcourſe of an aſſaſſination, though he had not approved of it, he thought it more expedient to throw himſelf on the king's

king's mercy. He was executed, perſiſting in the ſame confeſſion. CHAP. LXIX.

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Sir Thomas Armſtrong, who had been ſeized in Holland, and ſent over by Chidley, the king's miniſter, was preciſely in the ſame ſituation with Holloway: But the ſame favour, or rather juſtice, was refuſed him. The lawyers pretended, that, unleſs he had voluntarily ſurrendered himſelf before the expiration of the time aſſigned, he could not claim the privilege of a trial; not conſidering that the ſeizure of his perſon ought in equity to be ſuppoſed the accident which prevented him. The king bore a great enmity againſt this gentleman, by whom he believed the duke of Monmouth to have been ſeduced from his duty: He alſo aſſerted, that Armſtrong had once promiſed Cromwel to aſſaſſinate him; though it muſt be confeſſed, that the priſoner juſtified himſelf from this imputation by very ſtrong arguments. Theſe were the reaſons of that injuſtice which was now done him. It was apprehended that ſufficient evidence of his guilt could not be produced; and that even the partial juries, which were now returned, and which allowed themſelves to be entirely directed by Jefferies and other violent judges, would not give ſentence againſt him.

On the day that Ruſſel was tried, Eſſex, a man eminent both for virtues and abilities, was found in the Tower with his throat cut. The coroner's inqueſt brought in their verdict, *ſelf-murder*: Yet becauſe two children ten years old (one of whom too departed from his evidence) had affirmed that they heard a great noiſe from his window, and that they ſaw a hand throw out a bloody razor; theſe circumſtances were laid hold of, and the murder was aſcribed to the king and the duke, who happened that morning to pay a viſit to the Tower. Eſſex was ſubject to fits of deep melancholy, and had been ſeized with one immediately upon his commitment: He was accuſtomed to maintain the

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lawfulneſs of ſuicide: And his counteſs, upon a ſtrict inquiry, which was committed to the care of Dr. Burnet, found no reaſon to confirm the ſuſpicion: Yet could not all theſe circumſtances, joined to many others, entirely remove the imputation. It is no wonder, that faction is ſo productive of vices of all kinds: For, beſides that it inflames all the paſſions, it tends much to remove thoſe great reſtraints, honour and ſhame; when men find, that no iniquity can loſe them the applauſe of their own party, and no innocence ſecure them againſt the calumnies of the oppoſite.

But though there is no reaſon to think that Eſſex had been murdered by any orders from court, it muſt be acknowledged that an unjuſtifiable uſe in Ruſſel's trial was made of that incident. The king's counſel mentioned it in their pleadings as a ſtrong proof of the conſpiracy; and it is ſaid to have had great weight with the jury. It was inſiſted on in Sidney's trial for the ſame purpoſe.

State of the nation.

Some memorable cauſes, tried about this time, though they have no relation to the Rye-houſe conſpiracy, ſhow the temper of the bench and of the juries. Oates was convicted of having called the duke a popiſh traitor; was condemned in damages to the amount of one hundred thouſand pounds; and was adjudged to remain in priſon till he ſhould make payment. A like ſentence was paſſed upon Dutton-Colt for a like offence. Sir Samuel Barnardiſton was fined ten thouſand pounds; becauſe in ſome private letters which had been intercepted, he had reflected on the government. This gentleman was obnoxious, becauſe he had been foreman of that jury which rejected the bill againſt Shafteſbury. A pretence was therefore fallen upon for puniſhing him; though ſuch a precedent may juſtly be deemed a very unuſual act of ſeverity, and ſufficient to deſtroy all confidence in private friendſhip and correſpondence.

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THERE is another remarkable trial which ſhows the diſpoſition of the courts of judicature, and which, though it paſſed in the enſuing year, it may not be improper to relate in this place. One Roſewel, a preſbyterian preacher, was accuſed by three women of having ſpoken treaſonable words in a ſermon. They ſwore to two or three periods, and agreed ſo exactly together, that there was not the ſmalleſt variation in their depoſitions. Roſewel on the other hand made a very good defence. He proved, that the witneſſes were lewd and infamous perſons. He proved, that even during Cromwel's uſurpations, he had always been a royaliſt; that he prayed conſtantly for the king in his family; and that in his ſermons he often inculcated the obligations of loyalty. And as to the ſermon of which he was accuſed, ſeveral witneſſes, who heard it, and ſome who wrote it in ſhort-hand, depoſed that he had uſed no ſuch expreſſions as thoſe which were imputed to him. He offered his own notes as a farther proof. The women could not ſhow, by any circumſtance or witneſs, that they were at his meeting. And the expreſſions, to which they depoſed, were ſo groſs, that no man in his ſenſes could be ſuppoſed to employ them before a mixt audience. It was alſo urged, that it appeared next to impoſſible for three women to remember ſo long a period upon one ſingle hearing, and to remember it ſo exactly, as to agree to a tittle in their depoſitions with regard to it. The priſoner offered to put the whole upon this iſſue: He would pronounce, with his uſual tone of voice, a period as long as that to which they had ſworn; and then let them try to repeat it, if they could. What was more unaccountable, they had forgotten even the text of his ſermon; nor did they remember any ſingle paſſage, but the words to which they gave evidence. After ſo ſtrong a defence, the ſolicitor-general thought not

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not proper to make any reply: Even Jefferies went no farther than ſome general declamations againſt conventicles and preſbyterians: Yet ſo violent were party-prejudices, that the jury gave a verdict againſt the priſoner; which however appeared ſo palpably unjuſt, that it was not carried into execution.

The duke of Monmouth had abſconded on the firſt diſcovery of the conſpiracy; and the court could get no intelligence of him. At length, Halifax, who began to apprehend the too great prevalence of the royal party, and who thought that Monmouth's intereſt would prove the beſt counterpoiſe to the duke's, diſcovered his retreat, and prevailed on him to write two letters to the king, full of the tendereſt and moſt ſubmiſſive expreſſions. The king's fondneſs was revived; and he permitted Monmouth to come to court. He even endeavoured to mediate a reconciliation between his ſon and his brother; and having promiſed Monmouth, that his teſtimony ſhould never be employed againſt any of his friends, he engaged him to give a full account of the plot. But, in order to put the country party to ſilence, he called next day an extraordinary council, and informed them, that Monmouth had ſhowed great penitence for the ſhare which he had had in the late conſpiracy, and had expreſſed his reſolutions never more to engage in ſuch criminal enterpriſes. He went ſo far as to give orders, that a paragraph to the like purpoſe ſhould be inſerted in the Gazette. Monmouth kept ſilence till he had obtained his pardon in form: But finding that, by taking this ſtep, he was entirely diſgraced with his party, and that even though he ſhould not be produced in court as an evidence, his teſtimony, being ſo publicly known, might have weight with juries on any future trial, he reſolved at all hazards to retrieve his honour. His emiſſaries, therefore,

therefore, received orders to deny that he had ever made any ſuch confeſſion as that which was imputed to him; and the party exclaimed, that the whole was an impoſture of the court. The king, provoked at this conduct, baniſhed Monmouth his preſence, and afterwards ordered him to depart the kingdom.

THE court was aware, that the malcontents in England had held a correſpondence with thoſe of Scotland; and that Baillie of Jerviſwood, a man of merit and learning, with two gentlemen of the name of Campbel, had come to London, under pretence of negotiating the ſettlement of the Scottiſh preſbyterians in Carolina, but really with a view of concerting meaſures with the Engliſh conſpirators. Baillie was ſent priſoner to Edinburgh; but as no evidence appeared againſt him, the council required him to ſwear, that he would anſwer all queſtions which ſhould be propounded to him. He refuſed to ſubmit to ſo iniquitous a condition; and a fine of ſix thouſand pounds was impoſed upon him. At length, two perſons, Spence and Carſtares, being put to the torture, gave evidence which involved the earl of Tarras and ſome others, who, in order to ſave themſelves, were reduced to accuſe Baillie. He was brought to trial; and being in ſo languiſhing a condition from the treatment which he had met with in priſon, that it was feared he would not ſurvive that night, he was ordered to be executed the very afternoon on which he received ſentence.

THE ſeverities exerciſed during this part of the preſent reign, were much contrary to the uſual tenor of the king's conduct; and though thoſe who ſtudied his character more narrowly, have pronounced, that towards great offences he was rigid and inexorable, the nation were more inclined to aſcribe every unjuſt or hard meaſure to the prevalence of the duke, into whoſe hands the king had, from

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1683. from indolence, not from any opinion of his brother's ſuperior capacity, reſigned the reins of government. The crown indeed gained great advantage from the detection of the conſpiracy, and loſt none by the rigorous execution of the conſpirators: The horror entertained againſt the aſſaſſination plot, which was generally confounded with the project for an inſurrection, rendered the whole party unpopular, and reconciled the nation to the meaſures of the court. The moſt loyal addreſſes came from all parts; and the doctrine of ſubmiſſion to the civil magiſtrate, and even of an unlimited paſſive obedience, became the reigning principle of the times. The univerſity of Oxford paſſed a ſolemn decree, condemning ſome doctrines which they termed republican, but which indeed are, moſt of them, the only tenets on which liberty and a limited conſtitution can be founded. The faction of the excluſioniſts, lately ſo numerous, powerful, and zealous, were at the king's feet; and were as much fallen in their ſpirit as in their credit with the nation. Nothing that had the leaſt appearance of oppoſition to the court, could be hearkened to by the public[s].

1684. THE king endeavoured to increaſe his preſent popularity by every art; and knowing, that the ſuſpicion of popery was of all others the moſt dangerous, he judged it proper to marry his niece, the lady Anne, to prince George, brother to the king of Denmark. All the credit, however, and perſuaſion of Halifax, could not engage him to call a parliament, or truſt the nation with the election of a new repreſentative. Though his revenues were

[s] In the month of November this year died prince Rupert, in the ſixty-third year of his age. He had left his own country ſo early, that he had become an entire Engliſhman, and was even ſuſpected, in his latter days, of a bias to the country party. He was for that reaſon much neglected at court. The duke of Lauderdale died alſo this year.

extremely

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extremely burthened, he rather choſe to ſtruggle with the preſent difficulties, than try an experiment which, by raiſing afreſh ſo many malignant humours, might prove dangerous to his repoſe. The duke likewiſe zealouſly oppoſed this propoſal, and even engaged the king in meaſures which could have no tendency, but to render any accommodation with a parliament altogether impracticable. Williams, who had been ſpeaker during the two laſt parliaments, was proſecuted for warrants, iſſued by him, in obedience to orders of the houſe: A breach of privilege, which it ſeemed not likely any future houſe of commons would leave unqueſtioned. Danby and the popiſh lords, who had ſo long been confined in the Tower, and who ſaw no proſpect of a trial in parliament, applied by petition, and were admitted to bail: A meaſure juſt in itſelf, but deemed a great encroachment on the privileges of that aſſembly. The duke, contrary to law, was reſtored to the office of high admiral, without taking the teſt.

HAD the leaſt grain of jealouſy or emulation been mixed in the king's character; had he been actuated by that concern for his people's or even for his own honour, which his high ſtation demanded, he would have hazarded many domeſtic inconveniencies rather than allow France to domineer in ſo haughty a manner as that which at preſent ſhe aſſumed in every negotiation. The peace of Nimeguen, impoſed by the Dutch on their unwilling allies, had disjointed the whole confederacy; and all the powers engaged in it had diſbanded their ſupernumerary troops, which they found it difficult to ſubſiſt. Lewis alone ſtill maintained a powerful army, and by his preparations rendered himſelf every day more formidable. He now acted as if he were the ſole ſovereign in Europe, and as if all other princes were ſoon to become his vaſſals. Courts or chambers

State of foreign affairs.

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bers were erected in Metz and Briſac, for re-uniting ſuch territories as had ever been members of any part of his new conqueſts. They made inquiry into titles buried in the moſt remote antiquity. They cited the neighbouring princes to appear before them, and iſſued decrees, expelling them the conteſted territories. The important town of Straſbourg, an ancient and a free ſtate, was ſeized by Lewis: Aloſt was demanded of the Spaniards, on a frivolous, and even ridiculous, pretence; and upon their refuſal to yield it, Luxembourg was blockaded, and ſoon after taken[t]. Genoa had been bombarded, becauſe the Genoeſe had ſtipulated to build ſome gallies for the Spaniards; and, in order to avoid more ſevere treatment, that republic was obliged to yield to the moſt mortifying conditions. The empire was inſulted in its head and principal members; and uſed no other expedient for redreſs, than impotent complaints and remonſtrances.

SPAIN was ſo enraged at the inſolent treatment which ſhe met with, that, without conſidering her preſent weak condition, ſhe declared war againſt her haughty enemy: She hoped that the other powers of Europe, ſenſible of the common danger, would fly to her aſſiſtance. The prince of Orange, whoſe ruling paſſions were love of war and animoſity againſt France, ſeconded every where the applications of the Spaniards. In the year 1681, he made a journey to England, in order to engage the king into cloſer meaſures with the confederates. He alſo propoſed to the States to make an augmentation of their forces; but ſeveral of the provinces, and even the town of Amſterdam, had been gained by the French, and the

[t] It appears from ſir John Dalrymple's Appendix, that the king received from France a million of livres for his connivance at the ſeizure of Luxembourg, beſide his ordinary penſion.

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propoſal was rejected. The prince's enemies derived the moſt plauſible reaſons of their oppoſition from the ſituation of England, and the known and avowed attachments of the Engliſh monarch.

No ſooner had Charles diſmiſſed his parliament, and embraced the reſolution of governing by prerogative alone, than he dropped his new alliance with Spain, and returned to his former dangerous connections with Lewis. This prince had even offered to make him arbiter of his differences with Spain; and the latter power, ſenſible of Charles's partiality, had refuſed to ſubmit to ſuch a diſadvantageous propoſal. Whether any money was now remitted to England, we do not certainly know: But we may fairly preſume, that the king's neceſſities were in ſome degree relieved by France[u]. And though Charles had reaſon to apprehend the utmoſt danger from the great, and ſtill increaſing, naval power of that kingdom, joined to the weak condition of the Engliſh fleet, no conſideration was able to rouſe him from his preſent lethargy.

It is here we are to fix the point of the higheſt exaltation, which the power of Lewis or that of any

[u] The following paſſage is an extract from M. Barillon's letters kept in the *Depôt des Affaires etrangeres* at Verſailles. It was lately communicated to the author while in France. Convention verbale arretée le 1 Avril 1681. Charles 2 s'engage a ne rien omettre pour pouvoir faire connoitre à ſa majeſté qu'elle avoit raiſon de prendre confiance en lui; a ſe degager peu à peu de l'alliance avec l'Eſpagne, & a ſe mettre en etat de ne point etre contraint par ſon parlement de faire quelque choſe d'oppoſé aux nouveaux engagemens qu'il prenoit. En conſequence, le roi promet un ſubſide de deux millions la premiere des trois années de cet engagement & 500,000 écus les deux autres, ſe contentant de la parole de ſa majeſté Britannique, d'agir à l'egard de ſa majeſté conformement aux obligations qu'il lui avoit. Le Sr. Hyde demanda que le roi s'engagea a ne point attaquer les pays bas & même Straſbourg, temoignent que le roi ſon maitre ne pourroit s'empecher de ſecourir les pays bas, quand même ſon parlement ne ſeroit point aſſemblé. M. Barillon lui répondit en termes generaux par ordre du roi, que ſa majeſté n'avoit point intention de rompre la paix, & qu'il n'engageroit pas ſa majeſté Britannique en choſe contraires à ſes veritables intérêts.

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European prince, since the age of Charlemagne, had ever attained. The monarch, most capable of opposing his progress, was entirely engaged in his interests; and the Turks, invited by the malcontents of Hungary, were preparing to invade the emperor, and to disable that prince from making head against the progress of the French power. Lewis may even be accused of oversight, in not making sufficient advantage of such favourable opportunities, which he was never afterwards able to recall. But that monarch, though more governed by motives of ambition than by those of justice or moderation, was still more actuated by the suggestions of vanity. He contented himself with insulting and domineering over all the princes and free states of Europe; and he thereby provoked their resentment without subduing their power. While every one, who approached his person, and behaved with submission to his authority, was treated with the highest politeness; all the neighbouring potentates had successively felt the effects of his haughty imperious disposition. And by indulging his poets, orators, and courtiers, in their flatteries, and in their prognostications of universal empire, he conveyed faster, than by the prospect of his power alone, the apprehension of general conquest and subjection.

1684.

1685. The French greatness never, during his whole reign, inspired Charles with any apprehensions; and Clifford, it is said, one of his most favoured ministers, went so far as to affirm, that it were better for the king to be viceroy under a great and generous monarch, than a slave to five hundred of his own insolent subjects. The ambition, therefore, and uncontrolled power of Lewis were no diminution of Charles's happiness; and in other respects his condition seemed at present more eligible than it had ever been since his restoration.

A mighty

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A mighty faction, which had ſhaken his throne, and menaced his family, was totally ſubdued; and by their precipitate indiſcretion had expoſed themſelves both to the rigour of the laws and to public hatred. He had recovered his former popularity in the nation; and what probably pleaſed him more than having a compliant parliament, he was enabled to govern altogether without one. But it is certain, that the king, amidſt all theſe promiſing circumſtances, was not happy or ſatisfied. Whether he found himſelf expoſed to difficulties for want of money, or dreaded a recoil of the popular humour from the preſent arbitrary meaſures, is uncertain. Perhaps the violent, imprudent temper of the duke, by puſhing Charles upon dangerous attempts, gave him apprehenſion and uneaſineſs. He was overheard one day to ſay, in oppoſing ſome of the duke's haſty counſels, "Brother, I am too old to go again to "my travels: You may, if you chuſe it." Whatever was the cauſe of the king's diſſatisfaction, it ſeems probable, that he was meditating ſome change of meaſures, and had formed a new plan of adminiſtration. He was determined, it is thought, to ſend the duke to Scotland, to recall Monmouth, to ſummon a parliament, to diſmiſs all his unpopular miniſters, and to throw himſelf entirely on the good will and affections of his ſubjects[x]. Amidſt theſe truly wiſe and virtuous deſigns, he was ſeized with a ſudden fit, which reſembled an apoplexy; and though he was recovered from it by bleeding, he languiſhed only for a few days, and then expired, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and twenty-fifth of his reign. He was ſo happy in a good conſtitution of body, and had ever been ſo remarkably careful of his

King's ſickneſs, and death, 6th Feb.

[x] King James's Memoirs confirm this rumour, as alſo D'Avaux's Negotiations, 14 Dec. 1684.

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health, that his death ſtruck as great a ſurpriſe into his ſubjects, as if he had been in the flower of his youth. And their great concern for him, owing to their affection for his perſon, as well as their dread of his ſucceſſor, very naturally, when joined to the critical time of his death, begat the ſuſpicion of poiſon. All circumſtances however conſidered, this ſuſpicion muſt be allowed to vaniſh; like many others, of which all hiſtories are full.

DURING the few days of the king's illneſs, clergymen of the church of England attended him; but he diſcovered a total indifference towards their devotions and exhortation. Catholic prieſts were brought, and he received the ſacrament from them, accompanied with the other rites of the Romiſh church. Two papers were found in his cabinet, written with his own hand, and containing arguments in favour of that communion. The duke had the imprudence immediately to publiſh theſe papers, and thereby both confirmed all the reproaches of thoſe who had been the greateſt enemies to his brother's meaſures, and afforded to the world a ſpecimen of his own bigotry.

and character.

IF we ſurvey the character of Charles II. in the different lights, which it will admit of, it will appear various, and give riſe to different and even oppoſite ſentiments. When conſidered as a companion, he appears the moſt amiable and engaging of men; and indeed, in this view, his deportment muſt be allowed altogether unexceptionable. His love of raillery was ſo tempered with good breeding, that it was never offenſive: His propenſity to ſatire was ſo checked with diſcretion, that his friends never dreaded their becoming the object of it: His wit, to uſe the expreſſion of one who knew him well, and who was himſelf

himſelf a good judge [z], could not be ſaid ſo much to be very refined or elevated, qualities apt to beget jealouſy and apprehenſion in company, as to be a plain, gaining, well-bred, recommending kind of wit. And though perhaps he talked more than ſtrict rules of behaviour might permit, men were ſo pleaſed with the affable, communicative deportment of the monarch, that they always went away contented both with him and with themſelves. This indeed is the moſt ſhining part of the king's character; and he ſeems to have been ſenſible of it: For he was fond of dropping the formality of ſtate, and of relapſing every moment into the companion.

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In the duties of private life his conduct, though not free from exception, was, in the main, laudable. He was an eaſy, generous lover, a civil, obliging huſband, a friendly brother, an indulgent father, and a good-natured maſter [a]. The voluntary friendſhips, however, which this prince contracted, nay, even his ſenſe of gratitude, were feeble; and he never attached himſelf to any of his miniſters or courtiers with a ſincere affection. He believed them to have no motive in ſerving him but ſelf-intereſt; and he was ſtill ready, in his turn, to ſacrifice them to preſent eaſe or convenience.

With a detail of his private character we muſt ſet bounds to our panegyric on Charles. The other parts of his conduct may admit of ſome apology, but can deſerve ſmall applauſe. He was indeed ſo much fitted for private life, preferably to public, that he even poſſeſſed order, frugality, and œconomy, in the former: Was profuſe, thoughtleſs, and negligent, in the latter. When we conſider him as a ſovereign, his character, though not

[z] Marquis of Halifax. [a] Duke of Buckingham.

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altogether deſtitute of virtue, was in the main dangerous to his people, and diſhonourable to himſelf. Negligent of the intereſts of the nation, careleſs of its glory, averſe to its religion, jealous of its liberty, laviſh of its treaſure, ſparing only of its blood; he expoſed it by his meaſures, though he ever appeared but in ſport, to the danger of a furious civil war, and even to the ruin and ignominy of a foreign conqueſt. Yet may all theſe enormities, if fairly and candidly examined, be imputed, in a great meaſure, to the indolence of his temper: A fault which, however unfortunate in a monarch, it is impoſſible for us to regard with great ſeverity.

It has been remarked of Charles, that he never ſaid a fooliſh thing nor ever did a wiſe one: A cenſure which, though too far carried, ſeems to have ſome foundation in his character and deportment. When the king was informed of this ſaying, he obſerved, that the matter was eaſily accounted for: For that his diſcourſe was his own, his actions were the miniſtry's.

If we reflect on the appetite for power inherent in human nature, and add to it the king's education in foreign countries, and among the cavaliers, a party which would naturally exaggerate the late uſurpations of popular aſſemblies upon the rights of monarchy; it is not ſurpriſing, that civil liberty ſhould not find in him a very zealous patron. Haraſſed with domeſtic faction, weary of calumnies and complaints, oppreſſed with debts, ſtraitened in his revenue, he ſought, though with feeble efforts, for a form of government, more ſimple in its ſtructure and more eaſy in its management. But his attachment to France, after all the pains, which we have taken, by inquiry and conjecture, to fathom it, contains ſtill ſomething, it muſt be confeſſed, myſterious and inexplicable. The hopes of rendering himſelf abſolute by Lewis's aſſiſtance ſeem ſo

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chimerical, that they could ſcarcely be retained with ſuch obſtinacy by a prince of Charles's penetration: And as to pecuniary ſubſidies, he ſurely ſpent much greater ſums in one ſeaſon, during the ſecond Dutch war, than were remitted him from France during the whole courſe of his reign. I am apt therefore to imagine, that Charles was in this particular guided chiefly by inclination, and by a prepoſſeſſion in favour of the French nation. He conſidered that people as gay, ſprightly, polite, elegant, courteous, devoted to their prince, and attached to the catholic faith; and for theſe reaſons he cordially loved them. The oppoſite character of the Dutch had rendered them the objects of his averſion; and even the uncourtly humours of the Engliſh made him very indifferent towards them. Our notions of intereſt are much warped by our affections; and it is not altogether without example, that a man may be guided by national prejudices, who has ever been little biaſſed by private and perſonal friendſhip.

The character of this prince has been elaborately drawn by two great maſters, perfectly well acquainted with him, the duke of Buckingham and the marquis of Halifax; not to mention ſeveral elegant ſtrokes given by ſir William Temple. Dr. Welwood likewiſe and biſhop Burnet have employed their pencil on the ſame ſubject: But the former is ſomewhat partial in his favour; as the latter is by far too harſh and malignant. Inſtead of finding an exact parallel between Charles II. and the emperor Tiberius, as aſſerted by that prelate, it would be more juſt to remark a full contraſt and oppoſition. The emperor ſeems as much to have ſurpaſſed the king in abilities, as he falls ſhort of him in virtue. Provident, wiſe, active, jealous, malignant, dark, ſullen, unſociable, reſerved, cruel, unrelenting, unforgiving; theſe are the lights under which the Roman tyrant has been tranſmitted to

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us. And the only circumſtance in which it can juſtly be pretended he was ſimilar to Charles, is his love of women, a paſſion which is too general to form any ſtriking reſemblance, and which that deteſtable and deteſted monſter ſhared alſo with unnatural appetites,

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Thurnthwaite sculp.

London, Publish'd as the Act directs, Feb. 3. 1789, by T. Cadell, Strand.

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King's firſt tranſactions——A parliament——Arguments for and againſt a revenue for life——Oates convicted of perjury——Monmouth's invaſion——His defeat—and execution——Cruelties of Kirke——and of Jefferies——State of affairs in Scotland——Argyle's invaſion——defeat——and execution——A parliament——French perſecutions——The diſpenſing power——State of Ireland——Breach betwixt the king and the church——Court of eccleſiaſtical commiſſion——Sentence againſt the biſhop of London——Suſpenſion of the penal laws——State of Ireland——Embaſſy to Rome——Attempt upon Magdalen College——Impriſonment——trial, and acquittal of the biſhops——Birth of the prince of Wales.

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THE firſt act of James's reign was to aſſemble the privy council; where, after ſome praiſes beſtowed on the memory of his predeceſſor, he made profeſſions of his reſolution to maintain the eſtabliſhed government, both in church and ſtate. Though he had been reported, he ſaid, to have imbibed arbitrary principles, he knew that the laws of England were ſufficient to make him as great a monarch as he could wiſh; and he was determined never to depart from them. And as he had heretofore ventured his life in defence of the nation, he

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would ſtill go as far as any man in maintaining all its juſt rights and liberties.

THIS diſcourſe was received with great applauſe, not only by the council, but by the nation. The king univerſally paſſed for a man of great ſincerity and great honour; and as the current of favour ran at that time for the court, men believed that his intentions were conformable to his expreſſions. "We have now," it was ſaid, "the "word of a king; and a word never yet broken." Addreſſes came from all quarters, full of duty, nay of the moſt ſervile adulation. Every one haſtened to pay court to the new monarch [b]: And James had reaſon to think, that, notwithſtanding the violent efforts made by ſo potent a party for his excluſion, no throne in Europe was better eſtabliſhed than that of England.

THE king, however, in the firſt exerciſe of his authority, ſhewed, that either he was not ſincere in his profeſſions of attachment to the laws, or that he had entertained ſo lofty an idea of his own legal power, that even his utmoſt ſincerity would tend very little to ſecure the liberties of the people. All the cuſtoms and the greater part of the exciſe had been ſettled by parliament on the late king during life, and conſequently the grant was now expired; nor had the ſucceſſor any right to levy theſe branches of revenue. But James iſſued a proclamation, ordering the cuſtoms and exciſe to be paid as before; and this exertion of power he would not deign to qualify by the leaſt act or even appearance of condeſcenſion. It was

[b] The quakers addreſs was eſteemed ſomewhat ſingular for its plainneſs and ſimplicity. It was conceived in theſe terms: "We are come "to teſtify our ſorrow for the death of our good friend Charles, and "our joy for thy being made our governor. We are told thou art "not of the perſuaſion of the church of England, no more than "we: Wherefore we hope thou wilt grant us the ſame liberty which "thou alloweſt thyſelf. Which doing, we wiſh thee all manner of "happineſs."

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propoſed to him, that, in order to prevent the ill effects of any intermiſſion in levying theſe duties, entries ſhould be made, and bonds for the ſums be taken from the merchants and brewers: But the payment be ſuſpended till the parliament ſhould give authority to receive it. This precaution was recommended as an expreſſion of deference to that aſſembly, or rather to the laws: But for that very reaſon, probably, it was rejected by the king, who thought that the commons would thence be invited to aſſume more authority, and would regard the whole revenue, and conſequently the whole power, of the crown, as dependent on their good will and pleaſure.

THE king likewiſe went openly, and with all the enſigns of his dignity, to maſs, an illegal meeting: And by this imprudence he diſplayed at once his arbitrary diſpoſition, and the bigotry of his principles: Thoſe two great characteriſtics of his reign, and bane of his adminiſtration. He even ſent Caryl, as his agent, to Rome, in order to make ſubmiſſions to the pope, and to pave the way for a ſolemn re-admiſſion of England into the boſom of the catholic church. The pope, Innocent the XIth, prudently adviſed the king not to be too precipitate in his meaſures, nor raſhly attempt what repeated experience might convince him was impracticable. The Spaniſh ambaſſador, Ronquillo, deeming the tranquillity of England neceſſary for the ſupport of Spain, uſed the freedom to make like remonſtrances. He obſerved to the king, how buſy the prieſts appeared at court, and adviſed him not to aſſent with too great facility to their dangerous counſels. "Is it not the cuſtom in "Spain," ſaid James, "for the king to conſult "with his confeſſor?" "Yes," replied the ambaſſador, "and it is for that very reaſon our affairs "ſucceed ſo ill."

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JAMES gave hopes on his acceſſion, that he would hold the balance of power more ſteadily than his predeceſſor; and that France, inſtead of rendering England ſubſervient to her ambitious projects, would now meet with ſtrong oppoſition from that kingdom. Beſides applying himſelf to buſineſs with induſtry, he ſeemed jealous of national honour, and expreſſed great care, that no more reſpect ſhould be paid to the French ambaſſador at London than his own received at Paris. But theſe appearances were not ſufficiently ſupported, and he found himſelf immediately under the neceſſity of falling into a union with that great monarch, who, by his power as well as his zeal, ſeemed alone able to aſſiſt him in the projects formed for promoting the catholic religion in England.

NOTWITHSTANDING the king's prejudices, all the chief offices of the crown continued ſtill in the hands of proteſtants. Rocheſter was treaſurer; his brother Clarendon chamberlain; Godolphin chamberlain to the queen; Sunderland ſecretary of ſtate; Halifax preſident of the council. This nobleman had ſtood in oppoſition to James during the laſt years of his brother's reign; and when he attempted, on the acceſſion, to make ſome apology for his late meaſures, the king told him, that he would forget every thing paſt, except his behaviour during the bill of excluſion. On other occaſions, however, James appeared not of ſo forgiving a temper. When the principal excluſioniſts came to pay their reſpects to the new ſovereign, they either were not admitted, or were received very coldly, ſometimes even with frowns. This conduct might ſuit the character, which the king ſo much affected, of ſincerity: But by ſhowing, that a king of England could reſent the quarrels of a duke of York, he gave his people no high idea either of his lenity or magnanimity.

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On all occaſions, the king was open in declaring, that men muſt now look for a more active and more vigilant government, and that he would retain no miniſters, who did not practiſe an unreſerved obedience to his commands. We are not indeed to look for the ſprings of his adminiſtration ſo much in his council and chief officers of ſtate, as in his own temper, and in the character of thoſe perſons with whom he ſecretly conſulted. The queen had great influence over him; a woman of ſpirit, whoſe conduct had been popular till ſhe arrived at that high dignity. She was much governed by the prieſts, eſpecially the jeſuits; and as theſe were alſo the king's favourites, all public meaſures were taken originally from the ſuggeſtions of theſe men, and bore evident marks of their ignorance in government, and of the violence of their religious zeal.

The king however had another attachment, ſeemingly not very conſiſtent with this devoted regard to his queen and to his prieſts: It was to Mrs. Sedley, whom he ſoon after created counteſs of Dorcheſter, and who expected to govern him with the ſame authority which the dutcheſs of Portſmouth had poſſeſſed during the former reign. But James, who had entertained the ambition of converting his people, was told, that the regularity of his life ought to correſpond to the ſanctity of his intentions; and he was prevailed with to remove Mrs. Sedley from court: A reſolution in which he had not the courage to perſevere. Good agreement between the miſtreſs and the confeſſor of princes is not commonly a difficult matter to compaſs: But in the preſent caſe theſe two potent engines of command were found very incompatible. Mrs. Sedley, who poſſeſſed all the wit and ingenuity of her father, ſir Charles, made the prieſts and their counſels the perpetual objects of her raillery; and it is not to be doubted, but they, on their part, redoubled their exhort-

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exhortations with their penitent to break off ſo criminal an attachment.

How little inclination ſoever the king, as well as his queen and prieſts, might bear to an Engliſh parliament, it was abſolutely neceſſary, at the beginning of the reign, to ſummon that aſſembly. The low condition, to which the whigs or country party had fallen during the laſt years of Charles's reign, the odium under which they laboured on account of the Rye-houſe conſpiracy; theſe cauſes made that party meet with little ſucceſs in the elections. The general reſignation too of the charters had made the corporations extremely dependent; and the recommendations of the court, though little aſſiſted, at that time, by pecuniary influence, were become very prevalent. The new houſe of commons, therefore, conſiſted almoſt entirely of zealous tories and churchmen; and were of conſequence ſtrongly biaſſed, by their affections, in favour of the meaſures of the crown.

A parliament.

19th of May.

THE diſcourſe which the king made to the parliament, was more fitted to work on their fears than their affections. He repeated indeed, and with great ſolemnity, the promiſe which he had made before the privy-council, of governing according to the laws, and of preſerving the eſtabliſhed religion: But at the ſame time he told them, that he poſitively expected they would ſettle his revenue, and during life too, as in the time of his brother. "I might uſe many arguments," ſaid he, "to inforce this demand; the benefit of trade, "the ſupport of the navy, the neceſſities of the "crown, and the well-being of the government "itſelf, which I muſt not ſuffer to be precarious: "But I am confident, that your own conſideration "and your ſenſe of what is juſt and reaſonable, "will ſuggeſt to you whatever on this occaſion "might be enlarged upon. There is indeed one "popular

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" popular argument," added he, " which may be " urged againſt compliance with my demand: Men " may think, that by feeding me from time to " time with ſuch ſupplies as they think convenient, " they will better ſecure frequent meetings of par- " liament: But as this is the firſt time I ſpeak to " you from the throne, I muſt plainly tell you, that " ſuch an expedient would be very improper to " employ with me, and that the beſt way to engage " me to meet you often, is always to uſe me well."

It was eaſy to interpret this language of the king's. He plainly intimated, that he had reſources in his prerogative for ſupporting the government, independent of their ſupplies; and that ſo long as they complied with his demands, he would have recourſe to them; but that any ill uſage on their part would ſet him free from thoſe meaſures of government, which he ſeemed to regard more as voluntary than as neceſſary. It muſt be confeſſed, that no parliament in England was ever placed in a more critical ſituation, nor where more forcible arguments could be urged, either for their oppoſition to the court, or their compliance with it.

Reaſons for and againſt a revenue during life.

It was ſaid on the one hand, that jealouſy of royal power was the very baſis of the Engliſh conſtitution, and the principle to which the nation was beholden for all that liberty which they enjoy above the ſubjects of other monarchies. That this jealouſy, though, at different periods, it may be more or leſs intenſe, can never ſafely be laid aſleep, even under the beſt and wiſeſt princes. That the character of the preſent ſovereign afforded cauſe for the higheſt vigilance, by reaſon of the arbitrary principles which he had imbibed; and ſtill more, by reaſon of his religious zeal, which it is impoſſible for him ever to gratify, without aſſuming more authority than the conſtitution allows him. That power is to be watched in its very firſt encroachments; nor is any thing ever gained by timidity and ſubmiſſion.

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ſubmiſſion. That every conceſſion adds new force to uſurpation; and at the ſame time, by diſcovering the daſtardly diſpoſitions of the people, inſpires it with new courage and enterpriſe. That as arms were intruſted altogether in the hands of the prince, no check remained upon him but the dependent condition of his revenue; a ſecurity therefore which it would be the moſt egregious folly to abandon. That all the other barriers, which, of late years, had been erected againſt arbitrary power, would be found, without this capital article, to be rather pernicious and deſtructive. That new limitations in the conſtitution ſtimulated the monarch's inclination to ſurmount the laws, and required frequent meetings of parliament, in order to repair all the breaches, which either time or violence may have made upon that complicated fabric. That recent experience during the reign of the late king, a prince who wanted neither prudence nor moderation, had ſufficiently proved the ſolidity of all theſe maxims. That his parliament, having raſhly fixed his revenue for life, and at the ſame time repealed the triennial bill, found that they themſelves were no longer of importance, and that liberty, not protected by national aſſemblies, was expoſed to every outrage and violation. And that the more openly the king made an unreaſonable demand, the more obſtinately ought it to be refuſed; ſince it is evident, that his purpoſe in making it cannot poſſibly be juſtifiable.

On the other hand it was urged, that the rule of watching the very firſt encroachments of power could only have place, where the oppoſition to it could be regular, peaceful, and legal. That though the refuſal of the king's preſent demand might ſeem of this nature, yet in reality it involved conſequences, which led much farther than at firſt ſight might be apprehended. That the king in his ſpeech had intimated, that he had reſources in his prerogative, which, in caſe of oppoſition from parliament, he

thought himſelf fully entitled to employ. That if the parliament openly diſcovered an intention of reducing him to dependence, matters muſt preſently be brought to a criſis, at a time the moſt favourable to his cauſe, which his moſt ſanguine wiſhes could ever have promiſed him. That if we caſt our eyes abroad, to the ſtate of affairs on the continent, and to the ſituation of Scotland and Ireland; or, what is of more importance, if we conſider the diſpoſition of men's minds at home, every circumſtance would be found adverſe to the cauſe of liberty. That the country party, during the late reign, by their violent, and in many reſpects unjuſtifiable meaſures in parliament, by their deſperate attempts out of parliament, had expoſed their principles to general hatred, and had excited extreme jealouſy in all the royaliſts and zealous churchmen, who now formed the bulk of the nation. That it would not be acceptable to that party to ſee this king worſe treated than his brother in point of revenue, or any attempts made to keep the crown in dependance. That they thought parliaments as liable to abuſe as courts, and deſired not to ſee things in a ſituation, where the king could not, if he found it neceſſary, either prorogue or diſſolve thoſe aſſemblies. That if the preſent parliament, by making great conceſſions, could gain the king's confidence, and engage him to obſerve the promiſes now given them, every thing would by gentle methods ſucceed to their wiſhes. That if, on the contrary, after ſuch inſtances of compliance, he formed any deſigns on the liberty and religion of the nation, he would, in the eyes of all mankind, render himſelf altogether inexcuſable, and the whole people would join in oppoſition to him. That reſiſtance could ſcarcely be attempted twice; and there was therefore the greater neceſſity for waiting till time and incidents had fully prepared the nation for it. That the king's prejudices in favour of popery, though in the main pernicious, were

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were yet ſo far fortunate, that they rendered the connexion inſeparable between the national religion and national liberty. And that if any illegal attempts were afterwards made, the church, which was at preſent the chief ſupport of the crown, would ſurely catch the alarm, and would ſoon diſpoſe the people to an effectual reſiſtance.

THESE laſt reaſons, enforced by the prejudices of party, prevailed in parliament; and the commons, beſides giving thanks for the king's ſpeech, voted unanimouſly, that they would ſettle on his preſent majeſty during life, all the revenue enjoyed by the late king at the time of his demiſe. That they might not detract from this generoſity by any ſymptoms of diſtruſt, they alſo voted unanimouſly, that the houſe entirely relied on his majeſty's royal word and repeated declarations to ſupport the religion of the church of England; but they added, that that religion was dearer to them than their lives. The ſpeaker, in preſenting the revenue-bill, took care to inform the king of their vote with regard to religion; but could not, by ſo ſignal a proof of confidence, extort from him one word in favour of that religion, on which, he told his majeſty, they ſet ſo high a value. Notwithſtanding the grounds of ſuſpicion, which this ſilence afforded, the houſe continued in the ſame liberal diſpoſition. The king having demanded a further ſupply for the navy and other purpoſes, they revived thoſe duties on wines and vinegar, which had once been enjoyed by the late king; and they added ſome impoſitions on tobacco and ſugar. This grant amounted on the whole to about ſix hundred thouſand pounds a-year.

THE houſe of lords were in a humour no leſs compliant. They even went ſome lengths towards breaking in pieces all the remains of the popiſh plot; that once formidable engine of bigotry and faction.

A LITTLE

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1685. Oates convicted of perjury.

A LITTLE before the meeting of parliament, Oates had been tried for perjury on two indictments. One for depoſing that he was preſent at a conſult of jeſuits in London the twenty-fourth of April 1679: Another for depoſing that father Ireland was in London between the eighth and twelfth of Auguſt, and in the beginning of September in the ſame year. Never criminal was convicted on fuller and more undoubted evidence. Two and twenty perſons, who had been ſtudents at St. Omers, moſt of them men of credit and family, gave evidence, that Oates had entered into that ſeminary about Chriſtmas in the year 1678, and had never been abſent but one night, till the month of July following. Forty-ſeven witneſſes, perſons alſo of untainted character, depoſed, that father Ireland, on the third of Auguſt 1679, had gone to Staffordſhire, where he reſided till the middle of September; and, what ſome years before would have been regarded as a very material circumſtance, nine of theſe witneſſes were proteſtants, of the church of England. Oates's ſentence was, to be fined a thouſand marks on each indictment, to be whipped on two different days from Aldgate to Newgate, and from Newgate to Tyburn, to be impriſoned during life, and to be pilloried five times every year. The impudence of the man ſupported itſelf under the conviction, and his courage under the puniſhment. He made ſolemn appeals to Heaven, and proteſtations of the veracity of his teſtimony: Though the whipping was ſo cruel, that it was evidently the intention of the court to put him to death by that puniſhment, he was enabled, by the care of his friends, to recover: And he lived to king William's reign; when a penſion of four hundred pounds a-year was ſettled on him. A conſiderable number ſtill adhered to him in his diſtreſſes, and regarded him as the martyr of the proteſtant cauſe. The populace were

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affected with the ſight of a puniſhment, more ſevere than is commonly inflicted in England. And the ſentence of perpetual impriſonment was deemed illegal.

THE conviction of Oates's perjury was taken notice of by the houſe of peers. Beſides freeing the popiſh lords, Powis, Arundel, Bellaſis, and Tyrone, together with Danby, from the former impeachment by the commons, they went ſo far as to vote a reverſal of Stafford's attainder, on account of the falſehood of that evidence on which he had been condemned. This bill fixed ſo deep a reproach on the former proceedings of the excluſioniſts, that it met with great oppoſition among the lords; and it was at laſt, after one reading, dropped by the commons. Though the reparation of injuſtice be the ſecond honour which a nation can attain; the preſent emergence ſeemed very improper for granting ſo full a juſtification to the catholics, and throwing ſo foul a ſtain on the proteſtants.

Monmouth's invaſion.

THE courſe of parliamentary proceedings was interrupted by the news of Monmouth's arrival in the weſt with three ſhips from Holland. No ſooner was this intelligence conveyed to the parliament, than they voted that they would adhere to his majeſty with their lives and fortunes. They paſſed a bill of attainder againſt Monmouth; and they granted a ſupply of four hundred thouſand pounds for ſuppreſſing his rebellion. Having thus ſtrengthened the hands of the king, they adjourned themſelves.

MONMOUTH, when ordered to depart the kingdom, during the late reign, had retired to Holland; and as it was well known that he ſtill enjoyed the favour of his indulgent father, all marks of honour and diſtinction were beſtowed upon him by the prince of Orange. After the acceſſion of James, the prince thought it neceſſary to diſmiſs Monmouth

and

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and all his followers; and that illuſtrious fugitive retired to Bruſſels. Finding himſelf ſtill purſued by the king's ſeverity, he was puſhed, contrary to his judgment as well as inclination, to make a raſh and premature attempt upon England. He ſaw that James had lately mounted the throne, not only without oppoſition, but ſeemingly with the good-will and affections of his ſubjects. A parliament was ſitting, which diſcovered the greateſt diſpoſition to comply with the king, and whoſe adherence, he knew, would give a ſanction and authority to all public meaſures. The grievances of this reign were hitherto of ſmall importance; and the people were not as yet in a diſpoſition to remark them with great ſeverity. All theſe conſiderations occurred to Monmouth; but ſuch was the impatience of his followers, and ſuch the precipitate humour of Argyle, who ſet out for Scotland a little before him, that no reaſons could be attended to; and this unhappy man was driven upon his fate. 1685.

THE imprudence, however, of this enterpriſe did not at firſt appear. Though on his landing at Lime in Dorſetſhire, he had ſcarcely a hundred followers; ſo popular was his name, that in four days he had aſſembled above two thouſand horſe and foot. They were, indeed, almoſt all of them, the loweſt of the people; and the declaration which he publiſhed, was chiefly calculated to ſuit the prejudices of the vulgar, or the moſt bigoted of the whig-party. He called the king duke of York; and denominated him a traitor, a tyrant, an aſſaſſin, and a popiſh uſurper. He imputed to him the fire of London, the murder of Godfrey and of Eſſex, nay the poiſoning of the late king. And he invited all the people to join in oppoſition to his tyranny. 11th June.

THE duke of Albermarle, ſon to him who had reſtored the royal family, aſſembled the militia of Devonſhire to the number of 4000 men, and took

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poſt at Axminſter, in order to oppoſe the rebels; but obſerving that his troops bore a great affection to Monmouth, he thought proper to retire. Monmouth, though he had formerly given many proofs of perſonal courage, had not the vigour of mind requiſite for an undertaking of this nature. From an ill-grounded diffidence of his men, he neglected to attack Albermarle; an eaſy enterpriſe, by which he might both have acquired credit, and have ſupplied himſelf with arms. Lord Gray, who commanded his horſe, diſcovered himſelf to be a notorious coward; yet ſuch was the ſoftneſs of Monmouth's nature, that Gray was ſtill continued in his command. Fletcher of Salton, a Scotchman, a man of ſignal probity and fine genius, had been engaged by his republican principles in this enterpriſe, and commanded the cavalry together with Gray: But being inſulted by one who had newly joined the army, and whoſe horſe he had in a hurry made uſe of, he was prompted by paſſion, to which he was much ſubject, to diſcharge a piſtol at the man; and he killed him on the ſpot. This incident obliged him immediately to leave the camp; and the loſs of ſo gallant an officer was a great prejudice to Monmouth's enterpriſe.

THE next ſtation of the rebels was Taunton, a diſaffected town, which gladly and even fondly received them, and reinforced them with conſiderable numbers. Twenty young maids of ſome rank preſented Monmouth with a pair of colours of their handiwork, together with a copy of the bible. Monmouth was here perſuaded to take upon him the title of king, and aſſert the legitimacy of his birth; a claim which he advanced in his firſt declaration, but whoſe diſcuſſion he was determined, he then ſaid, during ſome time to poſtpone. His numbers had now increaſed to ſix thouſand; and he was obliged every day, for want of arms, to diſmiſs a great

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a great many who crowded to his ſtandard. He entered Bridgewater, Wells, Frome; and was proclaimed in all theſe places: But forgetting that ſuch deſperate enterpriſes can only be rendered ſucceſsful by the moſt adventurous courage, he allowed the expectations of the people to languiſh, without attempting any conſiderable undertaking.

WHILE Monmouth, by his imprudent and miſplaced caution, was thus waſting time in the weſt, the king employed himſelf in making preparations to oppoſe him. Six regiments of Britiſh troops were called over from Holland: The army was conſiderably augmented: And regular forces, to the number of 3000 men, were diſpatced under the command of Feverſham and Churchill, in order to check the progreſs of the rebels.

MONMOUTH, obſerving that no conſiderable men joined him, finding that an inſurrection, which was projected in the city, had not taken place, and hearing that Argyle, his confederate, was already defeated and taken; ſunk into ſuch deſpondency, that he had once reſolved to withdraw himſelf, and leave his unhappy followers to their fate. His followers expreſſed more courage than their leader, and ſeemed determined to adhere to him in every fortune. The negligent diſpoſition, made by Feverſham, invited Monmouth to attack the king's army at Sedgemoor near Bridgewater; and his men in this action ſhowed what a native courage and a principle of duty, even when unaſſiſted by diſcipline, is able to perform. They threw the veteran forces into diſorder; drove them from their ground; continued the fight till their ammunition failed them; and would at laſt have obtained a victory, had not the miſconduct of Monmouth and the cowardice of Gray prevented it. After a combat of three hours the rebels gave way; and were followed with great ſlaughter. About 1500 fell in the battle and purſuit. And thus was concluded in a few weeks this

5th July. Monmouth defeated;

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enterpriſe, raſhly undertaken, and feebly conducted.

MONMOUTH fled from the field of battle above twenty miles till his horſe ſunk under him. He then changed clothes with a peaſant in order to conceal himſelf. The peaſant was diſcovered by the purſuers, who now redoubled the diligence of their ſearch. At laſt, the unhappy Monmouth was found lying in the bottom of a ditch, and covered with fern: His body depreſſed with fatigue and hunger; his mind by the memory of paſt misfortunes, by the proſpect of future diſaſters. Human nature is unequal to ſuch calamitous ſituations; much more, the temper of a man, ſoftened by early proſperity, and accuſtomed to value himſelf ſolely on military bravery. He burſt into tears when ſeized by his enemies; and he ſeemed ſtill to indulge the fond hope and deſire of life. Though he might have known, from the greatneſs of his own offences, and the ſeverity of James's temper, that no mercy could be expected, he wrote him the moſt ſubmiſſive letters, and conjured him to ſpare the iſſue of a brother, who had ever been ſo ſtrongly attached to his intereſt. James, finding ſuch ſymptoms of depreſſion and deſpondency in the unhappy priſoner, admitted him to his preſence, in hopes of extorting a diſcovery of his accomplices: But Monmouth would not purchaſe life, however loved, at the price of ſo much infamy. Finding all efforts vain, he aſſumed courage from deſpair, and prepared himſelf for death, with a ſpirit better ſuited to his rank and character. This favourite of the people was attended to the ſcaffold with a plentiful effuſion of tears. He warned the executioner not to fall into the error which he had committed in beheading Ruſſel, where it had been neceſſary to repeat the blow. This precaution ſerved only to diſmay the executioner. He ſtruck a feeble blow on Monmouth, who raiſed his head from the block, and

and executed, 15th July.

and looked him in the face, as if reproaching him for his failure. He gently laid down his head a ſecond time; and the executioner ſtruck him again and again to no purpoſe. He then threw aſide the axe, and cried out that he was incapable of finiſhing the bloody office. The ſheriff obliged him to renew the attempt; and at two blows more the head was ſevered from the body. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THUS periſhed, in the thirty-ſixth year of his age, a nobleman, who, in leſs turbulent times, was well qualified to be an ornament of the court, even to be ſerviceable to his country. The favour of his prince, the careſſes of faction, and the allurements of popularity, ſeduced him into enterpriſes which exceeded his capacity. The good-will of the people ſtill followed him in every fortune. Even after his execution, their fond credulity flattered them with hopes of ſeeing him once more at their head. They believed that the perſon executed was not Monmouth, but one who, having the fortune to reſemble him nearly, was willing to give this proof of his extreme attachment, and to ſuffer death in his ſtead.

THIS victory, obtained by the king in the commencement of his reign, would naturally, had it been managed with prudence, have tended much to increaſe his power and authority. But by reaſon of the cruelty with which it was proſecuted, and of the temerity with which it afterwards inſpired him, it was a principal cauſe of his ſudden ruin and downfal.

SUCH arbitrary principles had the court inſtilled into all its ſervants, that Feverſham, immediately after the victory, hanged above twenty priſoners; and was proceeding in his executions, when the biſhop of Bath and Wells warned him, that theſe unhappy men were now by law entitled to a trial, and that their execution would be deemed a real murder. This remonſtrance, however, did not ſtop the ſa-

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Cruelty of colonel Kirke.

vage nature of colonel Kirke, a ſoldier of fortune, who had long ſerved at Tangiers, and had contracted, from his intercourſe with the Moors, an inhumanity leſs known in European and in free countries. At his firſt entry into Bridgewater, he hanged nineteen priſoners, without the leaſt inquiry into the merits of their cauſe. As if to make ſport with death, he ordered a certain number to be executed, while he and his company ſhould drink the king's health, or the queen's, or that of chief-juſtice Jefferies. Obſerving their feet to quiver in the agonies of death, he cried that he would give them muſic to their dancing; and he immediately commanded the drums to beat and the trumpets to ſound. By way of experiment, he ordered one man to be hung up three times, queſtioning him at each interval, whether he repented of his crime: But the man obſtinately aſſerting, that, notwithſtanding the paſt, he ſtill would willingly engage in the ſame cauſe, Kirke ordered him to be hung in chains. One ſtory, commonly told of him, is memorable for the treachery, as well as barbarity, which attended it. A young maid pleaded for the life of her brother, and flung herſelf at Kirke's feet, armed with all the charms which beauty and innocence, bathed in tears, could beſtow upon her. The tyrant was inflamed with deſire, not ſoftened into love or clemency. He promiſed to grant her requeſt, provided that ſhe, in her turn, would be equally compliant to him. The maid yielded to the conditions: But, after ſhe had paſſed the night with him, the wanton ſavage, next morning, ſhowed her, from the window, her brother, the darling object for whom ſhe had ſacrificed her virtue, hanging on a gibbet, which he had ſecretly ordered to be there erected for the execution. Rage and deſpair and indignation took poſſeſſion of her mind, and deprived her for ever of her ſenſes. All the inhabitants of that country, innocent as well as guilty,

were expoſed to the ravages of this barbarian. The ſoldiery were let looſe to live at free quarters; and his own regiment, inſtructed by his example, and encouraged by his exhortations, diſtinguiſhed themſelves in a particular manner by their outrages. By way of pleaſantry he uſed to call them *his lambs*; an appellation which was long remembered with horror in the weſt of England. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THE violent Jefferies ſucceeded after ſome interval; and ſhowed the people, that the rigours of law might equal, if not exceed, the ravages of military tyranny. This man, who wantoned in cruelty, had already given a ſpecimen of his character in many trials, where he preſided; and he now ſet out with a ſavage joy, as to a full harveſt of death and deſtruction. He began at Dorcheſter; and thirty rebels being arraigned, he exhorted them, but in vain, to ſave him, by their free confeſſion, the trouble of trying them: And when twenty-nine were found guilty, he ordered them, as an additional puniſhment of their diſobedience, to be led to immediate execution. Moſt of the other priſoners, terrified with this example, pleaded guilty; and no leſs than two hundred and ninety-two received ſentence at Dorcheſter. Of theſe, eighty were executed. Exeter was the next ſtage of his cruelty: Two hundred and forty-three were there tried, of whom a great number were condemned and executed. He alſo opened his commiſſion at Taunton and Wells; and every where carried conſternation along with him. The juries were ſo ſtruck with his menaces, that they gave their verdict with precipitation; and many innocent perſons, it is ſaid, were involved with the guilty. And on the whole, beſides thoſe who were butchered by the military commanders, two hundred and fifty-one are computed to have fallen by the hand of juſtice. The whole country was ſtrowed with the heads and limbs of traitors. Every village almoſt beheld the dead

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Of all the executions, during this diſmal period, the moſt remarkable were thoſe of Mrs. Gaunt and lady Liſle, who had been accuſed of harbouring traitors. Mrs. Gaunt was an anabaptiſt, noted for her beneficence, which ſhe extended to perſons of all profeſſions and perſuaſions. One of the rebels, knowing her humane diſpoſition, had recourſe to her in his diſtreſs, and was concealed by her. Hearing of the proclamation, which offered an indemnity and rewards to ſuch as diſcovered criminals, he betrayed his benefactreſs, and bore evidence againſt her. He received a pardon as a recompenſe for his treachery; ſhe was burned alive for her charity.

Lady Liſle was widow of one of the regicides who had enjoyed great favour and authority under Cromwel, and who having fled, after the reſtoration, to Lauzanne in Swiſſerland, was there aſſaſſinated by three Iriſh ruffians, who hoped to make their fortune by this piece of ſervice. His widow was now proſecuted for harbouring two rebels the day after the battle of Sedgemoor; and Jefferies puſhed on the trial with an unrelenting violence. In vain did the aged priſoner plead, that theſe criminals had been put into no proclamation; had been convicted by no verdict; nor could any man be denominated a traitor, till the ſentence of ſome legal court was paſſed upon him: That it appeared not by any proof, that ſhe was ſo much as acquainted with the guilt of the perſons, or had heard of their joining the rebellion of Monmouth: That though ſhe might be obnoxious on account of her family, it was well known, that her heart was ever loyal, and that no perſon in England had ſhed more tears for that tragical event, in which her huſband had

had unfortunately borne too great a ſhare: And that the ſame principles, which ſhe herſelf had ever embraced, ſhe had carefully inſtilled into her ſon, and had, at that very time, ſent him to fight againſt thoſe rebels whom ſhe was now accuſed of harbouring. Though theſe arguments did not move Jefferies, they had influence on the jury. Twice they ſeemed inclined to bring in a favourable verdict: They were as often ſent back with menaces and reproaches; and at laſt were conſtrained to give ſentence againſt the priſoner. Notwithſtanding all applications for pardon, the cruel ſentence was executed. The king ſaid, that he had given Jefferies a promiſe not to pardon her: An excuſe, which could ſerve only to aggravate the blame againſt himſelf. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

It might have been hoped, that, by all theſe bloody executions, a rebellion, ſo precipitate, ſo ill ſupported, and of ſuch ſhort duration, would have been ſufficiently expiated: But nothing could ſatiate the ſpirit of rigour which poſſeſſed the adminiſtration. Even thoſe multitudes, who received pardon, were obliged to atone for their guilt by fines, which reduced them to beggary; or where their former poverty made them incapable of paying, they were condemned to cruel whippings or ſevere impriſonments. Nor could the innocent eſcape the hands, no leſs rapacious than cruel, of the chief juſtice. Prideaux, a gentleman of Devonſhire, being thrown into priſon, and dreading the ſevere and arbitrary ſpirit, which at that time met with no control, was obliged to buy his liberty of Jefferies at the price of fifteen thouſand pounds; though he could never ſo much as learn the crime of which he was accuſed.

Goodenough, the ſeditious under-ſheriff of London, who had been engaged in the moſt bloody and deſperate part of the Rye-houſe conſpiracy, was taken priſoner after the battle of Sedgemoor, and reſolved to ſave his own life by an accuſation of Corniſh,

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Corniſh, the ſheriff, whom he knew to be extremely obnoxious to the court. Colonel Rumſey joined him in the accuſation; and the proſecution was ſo haſtened, that the priſoner was tried, condemned, and executed, in the ſpace of a week. The perjury of the witneſſes appeared immediately after; and the king ſeemed to regret the execution of Corniſh. He granted his eſtate to his family, and condemned the witneſſes to perpetual imprisonment.

THE injuſtice of this ſentence againſt Corniſh, was not wanted to diſguſt the nation with the court: The continued rigour of the other executions had already impreſſed an univerſal hatred againſt the miniſters of juſtice, attended with compaſſion for the unhappy ſufferers, who, as they had been ſeduced into this crime by miſtaken principles, bore their puniſhment with the ſpirit and zeal of martyrs. The people might have been willing on this occaſion to diſtinguiſh between the king and his miniſters: But care was taken to prove, that the latter had done nothing but what was agreeable to their maſter. Jefferies, on his return, was immediately, for thoſe eminent ſervices, created a peer; and was ſoon after veſted with the dignity of chancellor. It is pretended, however, with ſome appearance of authority, that the king was diſpleaſed with theſe cruelties, and put a ſtop to them by orders, as ſoon as proper information of them was conveyed to him[a].

State of affairs in Scotland.

WE muſt now take a view of the ſtate of affairs in Scotland; where the fate of Argyle had been decided before that of Monmouth. Immediately after the king's acceſſion, a parliament had been ſummoned at Edinburgh; and all affairs were there conducted by the duke of Queenſberry the commiſſioner, and the earl of Perth chancellor. The former had reſolved to make an entire ſurrender of the liberties of his country; but was determined ſtill to

[a] Life of lord-keeper North, p. 260. K. James's Memoirs, p. 144.

adhere

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adhere to its religion: The latter entertained no ſcruple of paying court even by the ſacrifice of both. But no courtier, even the moſt proſtitute, could go farther than the parliament itſelf towards a reſignation of their liberties. In a vote, which they called an offer of duty, after adopting the fabulous hiſtory of a hundred and eleven Scottiſh monarchs, they acknowledged, that all theſe princes, by the primary and fundamental law of the ſtate, had been veſted with a *ſolid* and *abſolute* authority. They declared their abhorrence of all principles and poſitions, derogatory to the king's ſacred, ſupreme, ſovereign, abſolute power, of which none, they ſaid, whether ſingle perſons or collective bodies, can participate, but in dependance on him and by commiſſion from him. They promiſed that the whole nation, between ſixteen and ſixty, ſhall be in readineſs for his majeſty's ſervice, where and as oft as it ſhall be his royal pleaſure to require them. And they annexed the whole exciſe, both of inland and foreign commodities, for ever to the crown.

ALL the other acts of this aſſembly ſavoured of the ſame ſpirit. They declared it treaſon for any perſon to refuſe the teſt, if tendered by the council. To defend the obligation of the covenant, ſubjected a perſon to the ſame penalty. To be preſent at any conventicle, was made puniſhable with death and confiſcation of moveables. Even ſuch as refuſed to give teſtimony, either in caſes of treaſon or nonconformity, were declared equally puniſhable as if guilty of thoſe very crimes: An excellent prelude to all the rigours of an inquiſition. It muſt be confeſſed, that nothing could equal the abject ſervility of the Scottiſh nation during this period, but the arbitrary ſeverity of the adminiſtration.

Argyle's invaſion;

IT was in vain that Argyle ſummoned a people, ſo loſt to all ſenſe of liberty, ſo degraded by repeated indignities, to riſe in vindication of their violated laws

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laws and privileges. Even thoſe who declared for him, were, for the greater part, his own vaſſals; men who, if poſſible, were ſtill more ſunk in ſlavery than the reſt of the nation. He arrived, after a proſperous voyage, in Argyleſhire, attended by ſome fugitives from Holland; among the reſt, by ſir Patrick Hume, a man of mild diſpoſitions, who had been driven to this extremity by a continued train of oppreſſion. The privy council was beforehand appriſed of Argyle's intentions. The whole militia of the kingdom, to the number of twenty-two thouſand men, were already in arms; and a third part of them, with the regular forces, were on their march to oppoſe him. All the conſiderable gentry of his clan were thrown into priſon. And two ſhips of war were on the coaſt to watch his motions. Under all theſe diſcouragements he yet made a ſhift, partly from terror, partly from affection, to collect and arm a body of about two thouſand five hundred men; but ſoon found himſelf ſurrounded on all ſides with inſuperable difficulties. His arms and ammunition were ſeized: His proviſions cut off: The marquis of Athole preſſed him on one ſide; lord Charles Murray on another; the duke of Gordon hung upon his rear; the earl of Dumbarton met him in front. His followers daily fell off from him; but Argyle, reſolute to perſevere, broke at laſt with the ſhattered remains of his troops into the diſaffected part of the low countries, which he had endeavoured to allure to him by declarations for the covenant. No one ſhowed either courage or inclination to join him; and his ſmall and ſtill decreaſing army, after wandering about for a little time, was at laſt defeated and diſſipated without an enemy. Argyle himſelf was ſeized and carried to Edinburgh; where, after enduring many indignities with a gallant ſpirit, he was publicly executed. He ſuffered on the former unjuſt ſentence which had been paſſed upon

defeat;

and execution.

upon him. The reſt of his followers either eſcaped or were puniſhed by tranſportation: Rumbold and Ayloffe, two Engliſhmen, who had attended Argyle on this expedition, were executed. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THE king was ſo elated with this continued tide of proſperity, that he began to undervalue even an Engliſh parliament, at all times formidable to his family; and from his ſpeech to that aſſembly, which he had aſſembled early in the winter, he ſeems to have thought himſelf exempted from all rules of prudence, or neceſſity of diſſimulation. He plainly told the two houſes, that the militia, which had formerly been ſo much magnified, was now found, by experience in the laſt rebellion, to be altogether uſeleſs; and he required a new ſupply, in order to maintain thoſe additional forces which he had levied. He alſo took notice, that he had employed a great many catholic officers, and that he had, in their favour, diſpenſed with the law, requiring the teſt to be taken by every one that poſſeſſed any public office. And to cut ſhort all oppoſition, he declared, that, having reaped the benefit of their ſervice during ſuch times of danger, he was determined, neither to expoſe them afterwards to diſgrace, nor himſelf, in caſe of another rebellion, to the want of their aſſiſtance. 9th Nov. A parliament.

SUCH violent averſion did this parliament bear to oppoſition; ſo great dread had been inſtilled of the conſequences attending any breach with the king; that it is probable, had he uſed his diſpenſing power without declaring it, no inquiries would have been made, and time might have reconciled the nation to this dangerous exerciſe of prerogative. But to invade at once their conſtitution, to threaten their religion, to eſtabliſh a ſtanding army, and even to require them, by their concurrence, to contribute towards all theſe meaſures, exceeded the bounds of their patience; and they began, for the firſt time,

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1685. to diſplay ſome ſmall remains of Engliſh ſpirit and generoſity. When the king's ſpeech was taken into conſideration by the commons, many ſevere reflections were thrown out againſt the preſent meaſures; and the houſe was with ſeeming difficulty engaged to promiſe in a general vote, that they would grant ſome ſupply. But inſtead of finiſhing that buſineſs, which could alone render them acceptable to the king, they proceeded to examine the diſpenſing power; and they voted an addreſs to the king againſt it. Before this addreſs was preſented, they reſumed the conſideration of the ſupply; and as one million two hundred thouſand pounds were demanded by the court, and two hundred thouſand propoſed by the country-party, a middle courſe was choſen, and ſeven hundred thouſand, after ſome diſpute, were at laſt voted. The addreſs againſt the diſpenſing power was expreſſed in moſt reſpectful and ſubmiſſive terms; yet was it very ill received by the king, and his anſwer contained a flat denial, uttered with great warmth and vehemence. The commons were ſo daunted with this reply, that they kept ſilence a long time; and when Coke, member for Derby, roſe up and ſaid, "I hope we are all Engliſh-"men, and not to be frightened with a few hard "words;" ſo little ſpirit appeared in that aſſembly, often ſo refractory and mutinous, that they ſent him to the Tower for bluntly expreſſing a free and generous ſentiment. They adjourned, without fixing a day for the conſideration of his majeſty's anſwer; and on their next meeting, they ſubmiſſively proceeded to the conſideration of the ſupply, and even went ſo far as to eſtabliſh funds for paying the ſum voted, in nine years and a half. The king, therefore, had in effect, almoſt without conteſt or violence, obtained a complete victory over the commons; and that aſſembly, inſtead of guarding their liberties, now expoſed to manifeſt peril, conferred an

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an additional revenue on the crown; and by rendering the king in ſome degree independent, contributed to increaſe thoſe dangers with which they had ſo much reaſon to be alarmed.

THE next oppoſition came from the houſe of peers, which has not commonly taken the lead on theſe occaſions; and even from the bench of biſhops, where the court uſually expects the greateſt complaiſance and ſubmiſſion. The upper houſe had been brought, in the firſt days of the ſeſſion, to give general thanks for the king's ſpeech; by which compliment they were underſtood, according to the practice of that time, to have acquieſced in every part of it: Yet, notwithſtanding that ſtep, Compton, biſhop of London, in his own name and that of his brethren, moved that a day ſhould be appointed for taking the ſpeech into conſideration: He was ſeconded by Halifax, Nottingham, and Mordaunt. Jefferies, the chancellor, oppoſed the motion; and ſeemed inclined to uſe in that houſe the ſame arrogance to which on the bench he had ſo long been accuſtomed: But he was ſoon taught to know his place; and he proved, by his behaviour, that inſolence, when checked, naturally ſinks into meanneſs and cowardice. The biſhop of London's motion prevailed.

THE king might reaſonably have preſumed, that, even if the peers ſhould ſo far reſume courage as to make an application againſt his diſpenſing power, the ſame ſteady anſwer which he had given to the commons would make them relapſe into the ſame timidity; and he might by that means have obtained a conſiderable ſupply, without making any conceſſions in return. But ſo imperious was his temper, ſo lofty the idea which he had entertained of his own authority, and ſo violent the ſchemes ſuggeſted by his own bigotry and that of his prieſts, that, without any delay, without waiting for any

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farther provocation, he immediately proceeded to a prorogation. He continued the parliament during a year and a half by four more prorogations; but having in vain tried, by ſeparate applications, to break the obſtinacy of the leading members, he at laſt diſſolved that aſſembly. And as it was plainly impoſſible for him to find among his proteſtant ſubjects a ſet of men more devoted to royal authority, it was univerſally concluded, that he intended thenceforth to govern entirely without parliaments.

NEVER king mounted the throne of England with greater advantages than James; nay, poſſeſſed greater facility, if that were any advantage, of rendering himſelf and his poſterity abſolute: But all theſe fortunate circumſtances tended only, by his own miſconduct, to bring more ſudden ruin upon him. The nation ſeemed diſpoſed of themſelves to reſign their liberties, had he not, at the ſame time, made an attempt upon their religion: And he might even have ſucceeded in ſurmounting at once their liberties and religion, had he conducted his ſchemes with common prudence and diſcretion. Openly to declare to the parliament, ſo early in his reign, his intention to diſpenſe with the teſts, ſtruck an univerſal alarm throughout the nation; infuſed terror into the church, which had hitherto been the chief ſupport of monarchy; and even diſguſted the army, by whoſe means alone he could now purpoſe to govern. The former horror againſt popery was revived by polemical books and ſermons; and in every diſpute the victory ſeemed to be gained by the proteſtant divines, who were heard with more favourable ears, and who managed the controverſy with more learning and eloquence. But another incident happened at this time, which tended mightily to excite the animoſity of the nation againſt the catholic communion.

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Lewis XIV. having long haraſſed and moleſted the proteſtants, at laſt revoked entirely the edict of Nantz; which had been enacted by Harry IV. for ſecuring them the free exerciſe of their religion; which had been declared irrevocable; and which, during the experience of near a century, had been attended with no ſenſible inconvenience. All the iniquities inſeparable from perſecution were exerciſed againſt thoſe unhappy religioniſts; who became obſtinate in proportion to the oppreſſions which they ſuffered, and either covered under a feigned converſion a more violent abhorrence of the catholic communion, or ſought among foreign nations for that liberty of which they were bereaved in their native country. Above half a million of the moſt uſeful and induſtrious ſubjects deſerted France; and exported, together with immenſe ſums of money, thoſe arts and manufactures which had chiefly tended to enrich that kingdom. They propagated every where the moſt tragical accounts of the tyranny exerciſed againſt them, and revived among the proteſtants all that reſentment againſt the bloody and perſecuting ſpirit of popery, to which ſo many incidents in all ages had given too much foundation. Near fifty thouſand refugees paſſed over into England; and all men were diſpoſed, from their repreſentations, to entertain the utmoſt horror againſt the projects which they apprehended to be formed by the king for the abolition of the proteſtant religion. When a prince of ſo much humanity and of ſuch ſignal prudence as Lewis could be engaged, by the bigotry of his religion alone, without any provocation, to embrace ſuch ſanguinary and impolitic meaſures, what might be dreaded, they aſked, from James, who was ſo much inferior in theſe virtues, and who had already been irritated by ſuch obſtinate and violent oppoſition? In vain did the king affect to throw the higheſt blame on the perſecutions in France: In vain did

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1685. he afford the moſt real protection and aſſiſtance to the diſtreſſed Hugonots. All theſe ſymptoms of toleration were regarded as inſidious; oppoſite to the avowed principles of his ſect, and belied by the ſevere adminiſtration which he himſelf had exerciſed againſt the non-conformiſts in Scotland.

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Diſpenſing power.

IT could not be expected that the lawyers appointed to plead againſt Hales would exert great force on that occaſion: But the cauſe was regarded with ſuch anxiety by the public, that it has been thoroughly canvaſſed in ſeveral elaborate diſcourſes[a]; and could men diveſt themſelves of prejudice, there want not ſufficient materials on which to form a true judgment. The claim and exerciſe of the diſpenſing power is allowed to be very ancient in England; and though it ſeems at firſt to have

[a] Particularly ſir Edward Herbert's Defence in the State Trials, and ſir Robert Atkin's Enquiry concerning the Diſpenſing Power.

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been copied from papal uſurpations, it may plainly be traced up as high as the reign of Henry III. In the feudal governments, men were more anxious to ſecure their private property than to ſhare in the public adminiſtration; and provided no innovations were attempted on their rights and poſſeſſions, the care of executing the laws, and enſuring general ſafety, was without jealouſy entruſted to the ſovereign. Penal ſtatutes were commonly intended to arm the prince with more authority for that purpoſe; and being in the main calculated for promoting his influence as firſt magiſtrate, there ſeemed no danger in allowing him to diſpenſe with their execution, in ſuch particular caſes as might require an exception or indulgence. That practice had ſo much prevailed, that the parliament itſelf had more than once acknowledged this prerogative of the crown; particularly during the reign of Henry V. when they enacted the law againſt aliens[b], and alſo when they paſſed the ſtatute of proviſors[c]. But though the general tenor of the penal ſtatutes was ſuch as gave the king a ſuperior intereſt in their execution beyond any of his ſubjects, it could not but ſometimes happen in a mixed government, that the parliament would deſire to enact laws, by which the regal power, in ſome particulars, even where private property was not immediately concerned, might be regulated and reſtrained. In the twenty-third of Henry VI. a law of this kind was enacted, prohibiting any man from ſerving in a county as ſheriff above a year; and a clauſe was inſerted by which the king was diſabled from granting a diſpenſation. Plain reaſon might have taught, that

[b] Rot. Parl. 1 Hen. V. n. xv.

[c] Ibid. 1 Hen. V. n. xxii. It is remarkable, however, that in the reign of Richard the Second, the parliament granted the king only a temporary power of diſpenſing with the ſtatute of proviſors. Rot. Parl. 15 Rich. II. n. i. A plain implication that he had not, of himſelf, ſuch a prerogative. So uncertain were many of theſe points at that time.

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this law, at leaſt, ſhould be exempted from the king's prerogative: But as the diſpenſing power ſtill prevailed in other caſes, it was ſoon able, aided by the ſervility of the courts of judicature, even to overpower this ſtatute, which the legiſlature had evidently intended to ſecure againſt violation. In the reign of Henry VII. the caſe was brought to a trial before all the judges in the exchequer-chamber; and it was decreed, that, notwithſtanding the ſtrict clauſe above mentioned, the king might diſpenſe with the ſtatute: He could firſt, it was alleged, diſpenſe with the prohibitory clauſe, and then with the ſtatute itſelf. This opinion of the judges, though ſeemingly abſurd, had ever ſince paſſed for undoubted law: The practice of continuing the ſheriffs had prevailed: And moſt of the property in England had been fixed by deciſions, which juries, returned by ſuch ſheriffs, had given in the courts of judicature. Many other diſpenſations of a like nature may be produced; not only ſuch as took place by intervals, but ſuch as were uniformly continued. Thus the law was diſpenſed with, which prohibited any man from going a judge of aſſize into his own county; that which rendered all Welchmen incapable of bearing offices in Wales; and that which required every one, who received a pardon for felony, to find ſureties for his good behaviour. In the ſecond of James I. a new conſultation of all the judges had been held upon a like queſtion: This prerogative of the crown was again unanimouſly affirmed[d]: And it became an eſtabliſhed principle in Engliſh juriſprudence, that, though the king could not allow of what was morally unlawful, he could permit what was only prohibited by poſitive ſtatute. Even the jealous houſe of commons, who extorted the petition of right from Charles I. made no ſcruple, by the mouth of

[d] Sir Edward Coke's Reports, ſeventh Report.

Glanville, their manager, to allow of the diſpenſing power in its full extent[e]; and in the famous trial of ſhip-money, Holborne, the popular lawyer, had freely, and in the moſt explicit terms, made the ſame conceſſion[f]. Sir Edward Coke, the great oracle of Engliſh law, had not only concurred with all other lawyers in favour of this prerogative, but ſeems even to believe it ſo inherent in the crown, that an act of parliament itſelf could not aboliſh it[g]. And he particularly obſerves, that no law can impoſe ſuch a diſability of enjoying offices as the king may not diſpenſe with; becauſe the king, from the law of nature, has a right to the ſervice of all his ſubjects. This particular reaſon, as well as all the general principles, is applicable to the queſtion of the teſts; nor can the dangerous conſequence of granting diſpenſations in that caſe be ever allowed to be pleaded before a court of judicature. Every prerogative of the crown, it may be ſaid, admits of abuſe: Should the king pardon all criminals, law muſt be totally diſſolved: Should he declare and continue perpetual war againſt all nations, inevitable ruin muſt enſue: Yet theſe powers are entruſted to the ſovereign; and we muſt be content, as our anceſtors were, to depend upon his prudence and diſcretion in the exerciſe of them.

THOUGH this reaſoning ſeems founded on ſuch principles as are uſually admitted by lawyers, the people had entertained ſuch violent prepoſſeſſions againſt the uſe which James here made of his prerogative, that he was obliged, before he brought on Hales's cauſe, to diſplace four of the judges, Jones, Montague, Charleton, and Nevil; and even ſir Edward Herbert, the chief juſtice, though a man of acknowledged virtue, yet, becauſe he here ſupported the pretenſions of the crown, was expoſed

[e] State Trials, vol. vii. firſt edit. p. 205. Parl. Hiſt. vol. viii. p. 132. [f] State Trials, vol. v. firſt edit. p. 171.
[g] Sir Edward Coke's Reports, twelfth Report, p. 18.

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to great and general reproach. Men deemed a diſpenſing to be in effect the ſame with a repealing power; and they could not conceive that leſs authority was neceſſary to repeal than to enact any ſtatute. If one penal law was diſpenſed with, any other might undergo the ſame fate: And by what principle could even the laws which define property be afterwards ſecured from violation? The teſt act had ever been conceived the great barrier of the eſtabliſhed religion under a popiſh ſucceſſor: As ſuch, it had been inſiſted on by the parliament; as ſuch, granted by the king; as ſuch, during the debates with regard to the excluſion, recommended by the chancellor. By what magic, what chicane of law, is it now annihilated, and rendered of no validity? Theſe queſtions were every where aſked; and men, ſtraitened by precedents and deciſions of great authority, were reduced either to queſtion the antiquity of this prerogative itſelf, or to aſſert, that even the practice of near five centuries could not beſtow on it ſufficient authority[h]. It was not conſidered, that the preſent difficulty or ſeeming abſurdity had proceeded from late innovations introduced into the government. Ever ſince the beginning of this century, the parliament had, with a laudable zeal, been acquiring powers and eſtabliſhing principles favourable to law and liberty: The authority of the crown had been limited in many important particulars: And penal ſtatutes were often calculated to ſecure the conſtitution againſt the attempts of miniſters, as well as to preſerve a general peace, and repreſs crimes and immoralities. A prerogative, however, derived from very ancient, and almoſt uniform practice, the diſpenſing power, ſtill remained, or was ſuppoſed to remain, with the crown; ſufficient in an inſtant to overturn this whole fabric, and to throw down all fences of the

[h] Sir Robert Atkins, p. 21.

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conſtitution. If this prerogative, which carries on the face of it ſuch ſtrong ſymptoms of an abſolute authority in the prince, had yet, in ancient times, ſubſiſted with ſome degree of liberty in the ſubject; this fact only proves, that ſcarcely any human government, much leſs one erected in rude and barbarous times, is entirely conſiſtent and uniform in all its parts. But to expect that the diſpenſing power could, in any degree, be rendered compatible with thoſe accurate and regular limitations, which had of late been eſtabliſhed, and which the people were determined to maintain, was a vain hope; and though men knew not upon what principles they could deny that prerogative, they ſaw that, if they would preſerve their laws and conſtitution, there was an abſolute neceſſity for denying, at leaſt for aboliſhing it. The revolution alone, which ſoon ſucceeded, happily put an end to all theſe diſputes: By means of it, a more uniform edifice was at laſt erected: The monſtrous inconſiſtence, ſo viſible between the ancient Gothic parts of the fabric and the recent plans of liberty, was fully corrected: And to their mutual felicity, king and people were finally taught to know their proper boundaries [i].

[i] It is remarkable, that the convention, ſummoned by the prince of Orange, did not, even when they had the making of their own terms in *the declaration of rights*, venture to condemn the diſpenſing power in general, which had been uniformly exerciſed by the former kings of England. They only condemned it ſo far, *as it had been aſſumed and exerciſed of late*, without being able to tell wherein the difference lay. But in the *bill of rights*, which paſſed about a twelvemonth after, the parliament took care to ſecure themſelves more effectually againſt a branch of prerogative, incompatible with all legal liberty and limitations; and they excluded, in poſitive terms, all diſpenſing power in the crown. Yet even then the houſe of lords rejected that clauſe of the bill, which condemned the exerciſe of this power in former kings, and obliged the commons to reſt content with aboliſhing it for the future. There needs no other proof of the irregular nature of the old Engliſh government, than the exiſtence of ſuch a prerogative, always exerciſed and never queſtioned, till the acquiſition of real liberty diſcovered, at laſt, the danger of it. See the Journals.

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WHATEVER topics lawyers might find to defend James's diſpenſing power, the nation thought it dangerous, if not fatal, to liberty; and his reſolution of exerciſing it may on that account be eſteemed no leſs alarming, than if the power had been founded on the moſt recent and moſt flagrant uſurpation. It was not likely, that an authority, which had been aſſumed, through ſo many obſtacles, would in his hands lie long idle and unemployed. Four catholic lords were brought into the privy council, Powis, Arundel, Bellaſis, and Dover. Halifax, finding that, notwithſtanding his paſt merits, he poſſeſſed no real credit or authority, became refractory in his oppoſition; and his office of privy ſeal was given to Arundel. The king was open, as well as zealous, in the deſire of making converts; and men plainly ſaw, that the only way to acquire his affection and confidence was by a ſacrifice of their religion. Sunderland, ſome time after, ſcrupled not to gain favour at this price. Rocheſter, the treaſurer, though the king's brother-in-law, yet, becauſe he refuſed to give this inſtance of complaiſance, was turned out of his office: The treaſury was put in commiſſion, and Bellaſis was placed at the head of it. All the courtiers were diſguſted, even ſuch as had little regard to religion. The diſhonour, as well as diſtruſt, attending renegades, made moſt men reſolve, at all hazards, to adhere to their ancient faith.

State of Scotland.

IN Scotland, James's zeal for proſelytiſm was more ſucceſsful. The earls of Murray, Perth, and Melfort, were brought over to the court religion; and the two latter noblemen made uſe of a very courtly reaſon for their converſion: They pretended, that the papers found in the late king's cabinet, had opened their eyes, and had convinced them of the preference due to the catholic religion. Queenſberry, who ſhowed not the ſame complaiſance, fell into

into total diſgrace, notwithſtanding his former ſervices, and the important ſacrifices, which he had made to the meaſures of the court. Theſe merits could not even enſure him of ſafety againſt the vengeance to which he ſtood expoſed. His rival, Perth, who had been ready to ſink under his ſuperior intereſt, now acquired the aſcendant; and all the complaints exhibited againſt him, were totally obliterated. His faith, according to a ſaying of Halifax, had made him whole. CHAP. LXX. 1686.

BUT it was in Ireland chiefly, that the maſk was wholly taken off, and that the king thought himſelf at liberty to proceed to the full extent of his zeal and his violence. The duke of Ormond was recalled; and though the primate and lord Granard, two proteſtants, ſtill poſſeſſed the authority of juſtices, the whole power was lodged in the hands of Talbot, the general, ſoon after created earl of Tyrconnel; a man who, from the blindneſs of his prejudices and fury of his temper, was tranſported with the moſt immeaſurable ardour for the catholic cauſe. After the ſuppreſſion of Monmouth's rebellion, orders were given by Tyrconnel to diſarm all the proteſtants, on pretence of ſecuring the public peace, and keeping their arms in a few magazines for the uſe of the militia. Next, the army was new-modelled; and a great number of officers were diſmiſſed, becauſe it was pretended that they or their fathers had ſerved under Cromwel and the republic. The injuſtice was not confined to them. Near three hundred officers more were afterwards broken, though many of them had purchaſed their commiſſions: About four or five thouſand private ſoldiers, becauſe they were proteſtants, were diſmiſſed; and being ſtripped even of their regimentals, were turned out to ſtarve in the ſtreets. While theſe violences were carrying on, Clarendon, who had been named lord lieutenant, came over; but he ſoon found, that, as he had refuſed to give the king State of Ireland.

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king the desired pledge of fidelity, by changing his religion, he possessed no credit or authority. He was even a kind of prisoner in the hands of Tyrconnel; and as he gave all opposition in his power to the precipitate measures of the catholics, he was soon after recalled, and Tyrconnel substituted in his place. The unhappy protestants now saw all the civil authority, as well as the military force, transferred into the hands of their inveterate enemies; inflamed with hereditary hatred, and stimulated by every motive, which the passion either for power, property, or religion, could inspire. Even the barbarous banditti were let loose to prey on them in their present defenceless condition. A renewal of the ancient massacres was apprehended; and great multitudes, struck with the best grounded terror, deserted the kingdom, and infused into the English nation a dread of those violences, to which, after some time, they might justly, from the prevalence of the catholics, think themselves exposed.

All judicious persons of the catholic communion were disgusted with these violent measures, and could easily foresee the consequences. But James was entirely governed by the rash counsels of the queen and of his confessor, father Peters, a jesuit, whom he soon after created a privy counsellor. He thought too, that, as he was now in the decline of life, it was necessary for him, by hasty steps, to carry his designs into execution; lest the succession of the princess of Orange should overturn all his projects. In vain did Arundel, Powis, and Bellasis, remonstrate, and suggest more moderate and cautious measures. These men had seen and felt, during the prosecution of the popish plot, the extreme antipathy which the nation bore to their religion; and though some subsequent incidents had seemingly allayed that spirit, they knew that the settled habits of the people were still the same, and that the smallest incident was sufficient to renew

new the former animoſity. A very moderate indulgence, therefore, to the catholic religion would have ſatisfied them; and all attempts to acquire power, much more to produce a change of the national faith, they deemed dangerous and deſtructive[a].

Breach betwixt the king and the church.

On the firſt broaching of the popiſh plot, the clergy of the church of England had concurred in the proſecution of it, with the ſame violence and credulity as the reſt of the nation: But dreading afterwards the prevalence of republican and preſbyterian principles, they had been engaged to ſupport the meaſures of the court; and to their aſſiſtance chiefly, James had owed his ſucceſſion to the crown. Finding that all theſe ſervices were forgotten, and that the catholic religion was the king's ſole favourite, the church had commenced an oppoſition to court meaſures; and popery was now acknowledged the more immediate danger. In order to prevent inflammatory ſermons on this popular ſubject, James revived ſome directions to preachers, which had been promulgated by the late king, in the beginning of his reign, when no deſign againſt the national religion was yet formed, or at leaſt apprehended. But in the preſent delicate and intereſting ſituation of the church, there was little reaſon to expect that orders founded on no legal authority, would be rigidly obeyed by preachers, who ſaw no ſecurity to themſelves but in preſerving the confidence and regard of the people. Inſtead of avoiding controverſy, according to the king's injunctions, the preachers every where declaimed againſt popery; and, among the reſt, Dr. Sharpe, a clergyman of London, particularly diſtinguiſhed himſelf, and affected to throw great contempt on thoſe who had been induced to change their religion by ſuch pitiful arguments as the Romiſh miſſionaries could

[a] D'Avaux, 10 January 1687.

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ſuggeſt. This topic, being ſuppoſed to reflect on the king, gave great offence at court; and poſitive orders were iſſued to the biſhop of London, his dioceſan, immediately to ſuſpend Sharpe, till his majeſty's pleaſure ſhould be farther known. The prelate replied, that he could not poſſibly obey theſe commands, and that he was not empowered, in ſuch a ſummary manner, to inflict any puniſhment even upon the greateſt delinquent. But neither this obvious reaſon, nor the moſt dutiful ſubmiſſions, both of the prelate and of Sharpe himſelf, could appeaſe the court. The king was determined to proceed with violence in the proſecution of this affair. The biſhop himſelf he reſolved to puniſh for diſobedience to his commands; and the expedient, which he employed for that purpoſe, was of a nature at once the moſt illegal and moſt alarming.

Among all the engines of authority formerly employed by the crown, none had been more dangerous, or even deſtructive, to liberty, than the court of high commiſſion, which, together with the ſtar-chamber, had been aboliſhed in the reign of Charles I. by act of parliament; in which a clauſe was alſo inſerted, prohibiting the erection in all future times, of that court, or any of a like nature. But this law was deemed by James no obſtacle; and an eccleſiaſtical commiſſion was anew iſſued, by which ſeven[k] commiſſioners were veſted with full and unlimited authority over the church of England. On them were beſtowed the ſame inquiſitorial powers, poſſeſſed by the former court of high commiſſion: They might proceed upon bare ſuſpicion; and the better to ſet the law at defiance, it was expreſsly inſerted in their patent itſelf, that they were to exerciſe their juriſdiction, notwithſtanding

Court of eccleſiaſtical commiſſion.

[k] The perſons named were the archbiſhop of Canterbury, Sancroft; the biſhop of Durham, Crew; of Rocheſter, Sprat; the earl of Rocheſter, Sunderland, chancellor Jefferies, and lord chief juſtice Herbert. The archbiſhop refuſed to act, and the biſhop of Cheſter was ſubſtituted in his place.

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any law or ſtatute to the contrary. The king's deſign to ſubdue the church was now ſufficiently known; and had he been able to eſtabliſh the authority of this new-erected court, his ſucceſs was infallible. A more ſenſible blow could not be given, both to national liberty and religion; and happily the conteſt could not be tried in a cauſe more iniquitous and unpopular than that againſt Sharpe and the biſhop of London.

THE prelate was cited before the commiſſioners. After denying the legality of the court, and claiming the privilege of all Chriſtian biſhops to be tried by the metropolitan and his ſuffragans; he pleaded in his own defence, that, as he was obliged, if he had ſuſpended Sharpe, to act in the capacity of a judge, he could not, conſiſtent either with law or equity, pronounce ſentence without a previous citation and trial: That he had by petition repreſented this difficulty to his majeſty; and not receiving any anſwer, he had reaſon to think that his petition had given entire ſatisfaction: That in order to ſhew farther his deference, he had adviſed Sharpe to abſtain from preaching, till he had juſtified his conduct to the king; an advice which, coming from a ſuperior, was equivalent to a command, and had accordingly met with the proper obedience: That he had thus, in his apprehenſion, conformed himſelf to his majeſty's pleaſure; but if he ſhould ſtill be found wanting to his duty in any particular, he was now willing to crave pardon, and to make reparation. All this ſubmiſſion, both in Sharpe and the prelate, had no effect: It was determined to have an example: Orders were accordingly ſent to the commiſſioners to proceed: And by a majority of votes the biſhop, as well as the doctor, was ſuſpended.

Sentence againſt the biſhop of London.

ALMOST the whole of this ſhort reign conſiſts of attempts always imprudent, often illegal, ſometimes both, againſt whatever was moſt loved and revered by

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by the nation: Even ſuch ſchemes of the king's as might be laudable in themſelves, were ſo diſgraced by his intentions, that they ſerve only to aggravate the charge againſt him. James was become a great patron of toleration, and an enemy to all thoſe perſecuting laws which, from the influence of the church, had been enacted both againſt the diſſenters and catholics. Not content with granting diſpenſations to particular perſons, he aſſumed a power of iſſuing a declaration of general indulgence, and of ſuſpending at once all the penal ſtatutes, by which a conformity was required to the eſtabliſhed religion. This was a ſtrain of authority, it muſt be confeſſed, quite inconſiſtent with law and a limited conſtitution; yet was it ſupported by many ſtrong precedents in the hiſtory of England. Even after the principles of liberty were become more prevalent, and began to be well underſtood, the late king had, oftener than once, and without giving much umbrage, exerted this dangerous power: He had, in 1662, ſuſpended the execution of a law which regulated carriages: During the two Dutch wars, he had twice ſuſpended the act of navigation: And the commons, in 1666, being reſolved, contrary to the king's judgment, to enact that iniquitous law againſt the importation of Iriſh cattle, found it neceſſary, in order to obviate the exerciſe of this prerogative, which they deſired not at that time entirely to deny or abrogate, to call that importation a nuiſance.

Penal laws ſuſpended.

THOUGH the former authority of the ſovereign was great in civil affairs, it was ſtill greater in eccleſiaſtical; and the whole deſpotic power of the popes was often believed, in virtue of the ſupremacy, to have devolved to the crown. The laſt parliament of Charles I. by aboliſhing the power of the king and convocation to frame canons without conſent of parliament, had ſomewhat diminiſhed the ſuppoſed extent of the ſupremacy; but ſtill very conſiderable remains

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mains of it, at leaſt very important claims, were preſerved, and were occaſionally made uſe of by the ſovereign. In 1662, Charles, pleading both the rights of his ſupremacy and his ſuſpending power, had granted a general indulgence or toleration; and in 1672 he renewed the ſame edict: Though the remonſtrances of his parliament obliged him, on both occaſions, to retract; and in the laſt inſtance, the triumph of law over prerogative was deemed very great and memorable. In general, we may remark, that where the exerciſe of the ſuſpending power was agreeable and uſeful, the power itſelf was little queſtioned: Where the exerciſe was thought liable to exceptions, men not only oppoſed it, but proceeded to deny altogether the legality of the prerogative, on which it was founded.

JAMES, more imprudent and arbitrary than his predeceſſor, iſſued his proclamation, ſuſpending all the penal laws in eccleſiaſtical affairs; and granting a general liberty of conſcience to all his ſubjects. He was not deterred by the reflection, both that this ſcheme of indulgence was already blaſted by two fruitleſs attempts; and that in ſuch a government as that of England, it was not ſufficient that a prerogative be approved of by ſome lawyers and antiquaries: If it was condemned by the general voice of the nation, and yet was ſtill exerted, the victory over national liberty was no leſs ſignal than if obtained by the moſt flagrant injuſtice and uſurpation. Theſe two conſiderations indeed would rather ſerve to recommend this project to James; who deemed himſelf ſuperior in vigour and activity to his brother, and who probably thought that his people enjoyed no liberties, but by his royal conceſſion and indulgence.

IN order to procure a better reception for his edict of toleration, the king, finding himſelf oppoſed by the church, began to pay court to the diſſenters; and he imagined that, by playing one party

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againſt another, he ſhould eaſily obtain the victory over both; a refined policy which it much exceeded his capacity to conduct. His intentions were ſo obvious, that it was impoſſible for him ever to gain the ſincere confidence and regard of the non-conformiſts. They knew that the genius of their religion was diametrically oppoſite to that of the catholics, the ſole object of the king's affections. They were ſenſible, that both the violence of his temper, and the maxims of his religion, were repugnant to the principles of toleration. They had ſeen that, on his acceſſion, as well as during his brother's reign, he had courted the church at their expence; and it was not till his dangerous ſchemes were rejected by the prelates, that he had recourſe to the non-conformiſts. All his favours, therefore, muſt, to every man of judgment among the ſectaries, have appeared inſidious: Yet ſuch was the pleaſure reaped from preſent eaſe, ſuch the animoſity of the diſſenters againſt the church, who had ſo long ſubjected them to the rigours of perſecution, that they every where expreſſed the moſt entire duty to the king, and compliance with his meaſures; and could not forbear rejoicing extremely in the preſent depreſſion of their adverſaries.

But had the diſſenters been ever ſo much inclined to ſhut their eyes with regard to the king's intentions, the manner of conducting his ſcheme in Scotland was ſufficient to diſcover the ſecret. The king firſt applied to the Scottiſh parliament, and deſired an indulgence for the catholics alone, without comprehending the preſbyterians: But that aſſembly, though more diſpoſed than even the parliament of England, to ſacrifice their civil liberties, reſolved likewiſe to adhere pertinaciouſly to their religion; and they rejected for the firſt time the king's application. James therefore found himſelf obliged to exert his prerogative; and he now thought it prudent to intereſt a party among his ſubjects, beſides

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the catholics, in ſupporting this act of authority. To the ſurpriſe of the haraſſed and perſecuted preſbyterians, they heard the principles of toleration every where extolled, and found that full permiſſion was granted to attend conventicles; an offence which, even during this reign, had been declared no leſs than a capital enormity. The king's declaration, however, of indulgence contained clauſes ſufficient to depreſs their joy. As if popery were already predominant, he declared, "that he "never would uſe force or *invincible neceſſity* againſt "any man on account of his perſuaſion or the pro-"teſtant religion:" A promiſe ſurely of toleration given to the proteſtants with great precaution, and admitting a conſiderable latitude for perſecution and violence. It is likewiſe remarkable, that the king declared in expreſs terms, "that he had thought "fit, by his ſovereign authority, prerogative royal, "and *abſolute* power, which all his ſubjects were "to obey *without reſerve*, to grant this royal tole-"ration." The dangerous deſigns of other princes are to be collected by a compariſon of their ſeveral actions, or by a diſcovery of their more ſecret counſels: But ſo blinded was James with zeal, ſo tranſported by his imperious temper, that even his proclamations and public edicts contain expreſſions which, without farther inquiry, may ſuffice to his condemnation.

THE Engliſh well knew, that the king, by the conſtitution of their government, thought himſelf entitled, as indeed he was, to as ample authority in his ſouthern, as in his northern kingdom; and therefore, though the declaration of indulgence publiſhed for England was more cautiouſly expreſſed, they could not but be alarmed by the arbitrary treatment to which their neighbours were expoſed. It is even remarkable, that the Engliſh declaration contained clauſes of a ſtrange import. The king there promiſed, that he would maintain

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his loving ſubjects in all their properties and poſſeſſions, as well of church and abbey lands as of any other. Men thought, that if the full eſtabliſhment of popery were not at hand, this promiſe was quite ſuperfluous; and they concluded, that the king was ſo replete with joy on the proſpect of that glorious event, that he could not, even for a moment, refrain from expreſſing it.

State of Ireland.

But what afforded the moſt alarming proſpect, was the continuance and even increaſe of the violent and precipitate conduct of affairs in Ireland. Tyrconnel was now veſted with full authority; and carried over with him as chancellor one Fitton, a man who was taken from a jail, and who had been convicted of forgery and other crimes, but who compenſated for all his enormities by a headlong zeal for the catholic religion. He was even heard to ſay from the bench, that the proteſtants were all rogues, and that there was not one among forty thouſand that was not a traitor, a rebel, and a villain. The whole ſtrain of the adminiſtration was ſuitable to ſuch ſentiments. The catholics were put in poſſeſſion of the council table, of the courts of judicature, and of the bench of juſtices. In order to make them maſters of the parliament, the ſame violence was exerciſed that had been practiſed in England. The charters of Dublin and of all the corporations were annulled; and new charters were granted, ſubjecting the corporations to the will of the ſovereign. The proteſtant freemen were expelled, catholics introduced; and the latter ſect, as they always were the majority in number, were now inveſted with the whole power of the kingdom. The act of ſettlement was the only obſtacle to their enjoying the whole property; and Tyrconnel had formed a ſcheme for calling a parliament, in order to reverſe that act, and empower the king to beſtow all the lands of Ireland on his catholic ſubjects. But in this ſcheme he met with oppoſition from the moderate

rate catholics in the king's council. Lord Bellaſis went even ſo far as to affirm with an oath, "that "that fellow in Ireland was fool and madman "enough to ruin ten kingdoms." The decay of trade, from the deſertion of the proteſtants, was repreſented; the ſinking of the revenue; the alarm communicated to England: And by theſe conſiderations the king's reſolutions were for ſome time ſuſpended; though it was eaſy to foreſee, from the uſual tenor of his conduct, which ſide would at laſt preponderate.

But the king was not content with diſcovering in his own kingdoms the imprudence of his conduct: He was reſolved, that all Europe ſhould be witneſs of it. He publicly ſent the earl of Caſtlemaine ambaſſador extraordinary to Rome, in order to expreſs his obeiſance to the pope, and to make advances for reconciling his kingdoms, in form, to the catholic communion. Never man, who came on ſo important an errand, met with ſo many neglects, and even affronts, as Caſtlemaine. The pontiff, inſtead of being pleaſed with this forward ſtep, concluded that a ſcheme, conducted with ſo much indiſcretion, could never poſſibly be ſucceſsful. And as he was engaged in a violent quarrel with the French monarch, a quarrel which intereſted him more nearly than the converſion of England, he bore little regard to James, whom he believed too cloſely connected with his capital enemy.

Embaſſy to Rome.

The only proof of complaiſance which James received from the pontiff was his ſending a nuncio to England, in return for the embaſſy. By act of parliament any communication with the pope was made treaſon: Yet ſo little regard did the king pay to the laws, that he gave the nuncio a public and ſolemn reception at Windſor. The duke of Somerſet, one of the bed-chamber, becauſe he refuſed to aſſiſt at this ceremony, was diſmiſſed from his employment. The nuncio reſided openly in London

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during the reſt of this reign. Four catholic biſhops were publicly conſecrated in the king's chapel, and ſent out under the title of vicars apoſtolical, to exerciſe the epiſcopal function in their reſpective dioceſes. Their paſtoral letters, directed to the lay catholics of England, were printed and diſperſed by the expreſs allowance and permiſſion of the king. The regular clergy of that communion appeared at court in the habits of their order; and ſome of them were ſo indiſcreet as to boaſt, that, in a little time, they hoped to walk in proceſſion through the capital.

WHILE the king ſhocked in the moſt open manner all the principles and prejudices of his proteſtant ſubjects, he could not ſometimes but be ſenſible, that he ſtood in need of their aſſiſtance for the execution of his deſigns. He had himſelf, by virtue of his prerogative, ſuſpended the penal laws, and diſpenſed with the teſt; but he would gladly have obtained the ſanction of parliament to theſe acts of power; and he knew that, without this authority, his edicts alone would never afford a durable ſecurity to the catholics. He had employed, therefore, with the members of parliament many private conferences, which were then called *cloſetings*; and he uſed every expedient of reaſons, menaces, and promiſes, to break their obſtinacy in this particular. Finding all his efforts fruitleſs, he had diſſolved the parliament, and was determined to call a new one, from which he expected more complaiſance and ſubmiſſion. By the practice of annulling the charters, the king was become maſter of all the corporations, and could at pleaſure change every where the whole magiſtracy. The church party, therefore, by whom the crown had been hitherto ſo remarkably ſupported, and to whom the king viſibly owed his ſafety from all the efforts of his enemies, was deprived of authority; and the diſſenters, thoſe very enemies, were, firſt in London, and afterwards

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wards in every other corporation, ſubſtituted in their place. Not content with this violent and dangerous innovation, the king appointed certain regulators to examine the qualifications of electors; and directions were given them to exclude all ſuch as adhered to the teſt and penal ſtatutes[1]. Queries to this purpoſe were openly propoſed in all places, in order to try the ſentiments of men, and enable the king to judge of the proceedings of the future parliament. The power of the crown was at this time ſo great; and the revenue, managed by James's frugality, ſo conſiderable and independent; that, if he had embraced any national party, he had been enſured of ſucceſs; and might have carried his authority to what length he pleaſed. But the catholics, to whom he had entirely devoted himſelf, were ſcarcely the hundredth part of the people. Even the proteſtant non-conformiſts, whom he ſo much courted, were little more than the twentieth; and what was worſe, repoſed no confidence in the unnatural alliance contracted with the catholics, and in the principles of toleration, which, contrary to their uſual practice in all ages, ſeemed at preſent to be adopted by that ſect. The king, therefore, finding little hopes of ſucceſs, delayed the ſummoning of a parliament, and proceeded ſtill in the exerciſe of his illegal and arbitrary authority.

THE whole power in Ireland had been committed to catholics. In Scotland, all the miniſters, whom the king chiefly truſted, were converts to that religion. Every great office in England, civil and military, was gradually transferred from the pro-

[1] The elections in ſome places, particularly in York, were tranſferred from the people to the magiſtrates, who, by the new charter, were all named by the crown. Sir John Reresby's Memoirs, p. 272. This was in reality nothing different from the king's naming the members. The ſame act of authority had been employed in all the boroughs of Scotland.

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teſtants. Rocheſter and Clarendon, the king's brothers-in-law, though they had ever been faithful to his intereſts, could not, by all their ſervices, atone for their adherence to the national religion; and had been diſmiſſed from their employments. The violent Jefferies himſelf, though he had ſacrificed juſtice and humanity to the court; yet, becauſe he refuſed alſo to give up his religion, was declining in favour and intereſt. Nothing now remained but to open the door in the church and univerſities to the intruſion of the catholics. It was not long before the king made this raſh effort; and by conſtraining the prelacy and eſtabliſhed church to ſeek protection in the principles of liberty, he at laſt left himſelf entirely without friends and adherents.

FATHER Francis, a Benedictine, was recommended by the king's mandate to the univerſity of Cambridge for the degree of maſter of arts; and as it was uſual for the univerſity to confer that degree on perſons eminent for learning, without regard to their religion; and as they had even admitted lately the ſecretary to the ambaſſador of Morocco; the king on that account thought himſelf the better entitled to compliance. But the univerſity conſidered, that there was a great difference between a compliment beſtowed on foreigners, and degrees which gave a title to vote in all the elections and ſtatutes of the univerſity, and which, if conferred on the catholics, would infallibly in time render that ſect entirely ſuperior. They therefore refuſed to obey the king's mandate, and were cited to appear before the court of eccleſiaſtical commiſſion. The vice-chancellor was ſuſpended by that court; but as the univerſity choſe a man of ſpirit to ſucceed him, the king thought proper for the preſent to drop his pretenſions.

Attempt upon Magdalen college.

THE attempt upon the univerſity of Oxford was proſecuted with more inflexible obſtinacy, and was attended

attended with more important conſequences. This university had lately, in their famous decree, made a ſolemn profeſſion of paſſive obedience; and the court probably expected, that they would ſhow their ſincerity, when their turn came to practiſe that doctrine; which, though, if carried to the utmoſt extent, it be contrary both to reaſon and to nature, is apt to meet with the more effectual oppoſition from the latter principle. The preſident of Magdalen college, one of the richeſt foundations in Europe, dying about this time, a mandate was ſent in favour of Farmer, a new convert, but one who, beſides his being a catholic, had not, in other reſpects, the qualifications required by the ſtatutes for enjoying that office. The fellows of the college made ſubmiſſive applications to the king for recalling his mandate; but before they received an anſwer, the day came, on which, by their ſtatutes, they were obliged to proceed to an election. They choſe Dr. Hough, a man of virtue, as well as of the firmneſs and vigour requiſite for maintaining his own rights and thoſe of the univerſity. In order to puniſh the college for this contumacy, as it was called, an inferior eccleſiaſtical commiſſion was ſent down, and the new preſident and the fellows were cited before it. So little regard had been paid to any conſideration beſides religion, that Farmer, on inquiry, was found guilty of the loweſt and moſt ſcandalous vices; inſomuch that even the eccleſiaſtical commiſſioners were aſhamed to inſiſt on his election. A new mandate, therefore, was iſſued in favour of Parker, lately created biſhop of Oxford, a man of a proſtitute character, but who, like Farmer, atoned for all his vices by his avowed willingneſs to embrace the catholic religion. The college repreſented, that all preſidents had ever been appointed by election, and there were few inſtances of the king's interpoſing by his recommendation in favour of any candidate; that having already made a regular

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a regular election of a president, they could not deprive him of his office, and, during his life-time, substitute any other in his place; that, even if there were a vacancy, Parker, by the statutes of their founder, could not be chosen; that they had all of them bound themselves by oath to observe these statutes, and never on any account to accept of a dispensation; and that the college had at all times so much distinguished itself by its loyalty, that nothing but the most invincible necessity could now oblige them to oppose his majesty's inclinations. All these reasons availed them nothing. The president and all the fellows, except two who complied, were expelled the college; and Parker was put in possession of the office. This act of violence, of all those which were committed during the reign of James, is perhaps the most illegal and arbitrary. When the dispensing power was the most strenuously insisted on by court lawyers, it had still been allowed, that the statutes which regard private property, could not legally be infringed by that prerogative. Yet in this instance it appeared, that even these were not now secure from invasion. The privileges of a college are attacked: Men are illegally dispossessed of their property, for adhering to their duty, to their oaths, and to their religion: The fountains of the church are attempted to be poisoned; nor would it be long, it was concluded, ere all ecclesiastical, as well as civil preferments, would be bestowed on such as, negligent of honour, virtue, and sincerity, basely sacrificed their faith to the reigning superstition. Such were the general sentiments; and as the universities have an intimate connexion with the ecclesiastical establishments, and mightily interest all those who have there received their education, this arbitrary proceeding begat an universal discontent against the king's administration.

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THE next measure of the court was an insult still more open on the ecclesiastics, and rendered the breach between the king and that powerful body fatal, as well as incurable. It is strange that James, when he felt, from the sentiments of his own heart, what a mighty influence religious zeal had over him, should yet be so infatuated as never once to suspect that it might possibly have a proportionable authority over his subjects. Could he have profited by repeated experience, he had seen instances enow of their strong aversion to that communion, which, from a violent, imperious temper, he was determined, by every possible expedient, to introduce into his kingdoms. 1687.

THE king published a second declaration of indulgence, almost in the same terms with the former; and he subjoined an order, that, immediately after divine service, it should be read by the clergy in all the churches. As they were known universally to disapprove of the use made of the suspending power, this clause, they thought, could be meant only as an insult upon them; and they were sensible, that, by their compliance, they should expose themselves, both to public contempt, on account of their tame behaviour, and to public hatred, by their indirectly patronising so obnoxious a prerogative[m]. They were determined, therefore, almost universally to preserve the regard of the people; their only protection, while the laws were become of so little validity, and while the court was so deeply engaged in opposite interests. In order to encourage them in this resolution, six prelates, namely Lloyde bishop of St. Asaph, Ken of 1688.

[m] When Charles dissolved his last parliament, he set forth a declaration giving his reasons for that measure, and this declaration the clergy had been ordered to read to the people after divine service. These orders were agreeable to their party prejudices, and they willingly submitted to them. The contrary was now the case.

Bath

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Bath and Wells, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, White of Peterborough, and Trelawney of Briſtol, met privately with the primate, and concerted the form of a petition to the king. They there repreſent in few words, that, though poſſeſſed of the higheſt ſenſe of loyalty, a virtue of which the church of England had given ſuch eminent teſtimonies; and though deſirous of affording eaſe, in a legal way, to all proteſtant diſſenters; yet, becauſe the declaration of indulgence was founded on a prerogative formerly declared illegal by parliament, they could not, in prudence, honour, or conſcience, ſo far make themſelves parties as the diſtribution of it all over the kingdom would be interpreted to amount to. They therefore beſought the king, that he would not inſiſt upon their reading that declaration [n].

The king was incapable, not only of yielding to the greateſt oppoſition, but of allowing the ſlighteſt and moſt reſpectful contradiction to paſs uncenſured. He immediately embraced a reſolution (and his reſolutions, when once embraced,

[n] The words of the petition were: That the great averſeneſs found in themſelves to their diſtributing and publiſhing in all their churches your majeſty's late declaration for liberty of conſcience, proceeds neither from any want of duty and obedience to your majeſty (our holy mother the church of England, being both in her principles and her conſtant practice unqueſtionably loyal, and having to her great honour been more than once publicly acknowledged to be ſo by your gracious majeſty) nor yet from any want of tenderneſs to diſſenters, in relation to whom we are willing to come to ſuch a temper as ſhall be thought fit, when the matter ſhall be conſidered and ſettled in parliament and convocation. But among many other conſiderations, from this eſpecially, becauſe that declaration is founded upon ſuch a diſpenſing power as hath been often declared illegal in parliament, and particularly in the years 1662 and 1672, and in the beginning of your majeſty's reign, and is a matter of ſo great moment and conſequence to the whole nation both in church and ſtate, that your petitioners cannot in prudence, honour, or conſcience, ſo far make themſelves parties to it as a diſtribution of it all over the nation, and the ſolemn publication of it once and again, even in God's houſe, and in the time of divine ſervice, muſt amount to in common and reaſonable conſtruction.

were

were inflexible) of puniſhing the biſhops, for a petition ſo popular in its matter, and ſo prudent and cautious in the expreſſion. As the petition was delivered him in private, he ſummoned them before the council; and queſtioned them whether they would acknowledge it. The biſhops ſaw his intention, and ſeemed long deſirous to decline anſwering: But being puſhed by the chancellor, they at laſt avowed the petition. On their refuſal to give bail, an order was immediately drawn for their commitment to the Tower; and the crown lawyers received directions to proſecute them for the ſeditious libel which, it was pretended, they had compoſed and uttered.

Impriſonment.

THE people were already aware of the danger to which the prelates were expoſed; and were raiſed to the higheſt pitch of anxiety and attention with regard to the iſſue of this extraordinary affair. But when they beheld theſe fathers of the church brought from court under the cuſtody of a guard, when they ſaw them embarked in veſſels on the river, and conveyed towards the Tower, all their affection for liberty, all their zeal for religion, blazed up at once; and they flew to behold this affecting ſpectacle. The whole ſhore was covered with crowds of proſtrate ſpectators, who at once implored the bleſſing of thoſe holy paſtors, and addreſſed their petitions towards Heaven for protection during this extreme danger, to which their country and their religion ſtood expoſed. Even the ſoldiers, ſeized with the contagion of the ſame ſpirit, flung themſelves on their knees before the diſtreſſed prelates, and craved the benediction of thoſe criminals whom they were appointed to guard. Some perſons ran into the water, that they might participate more nearly in thoſe bleſſings, which the prelates were diſtributing on all around them. The biſhops themſelves, during this triumphant ſuffering, augmented the general

favour,

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favour, by the moſt lowly ſubmiſſive deportment; and they ſtill exhorted the people to fear God, honour the king, and maintain their loyalty; expreſſions more animating than the moſt inflammatory ſpeeches. And no ſooner had they entered the precincts of the Tower than they hurried to chapel, in order to return thanks for thoſe afflictions, which Heaven, in defence of its holy cauſe, had thought them worthy to endure.

trial,

THEIR paſſage, when conducted to their trial, was, if poſſible, attended by greater crowds of anxious ſpectators. All men ſaw the dangerous criſis to which affairs were reduced, and were ſenſible that the king could not have put the iſſue on a cauſe more unfavourable for himſelf than that in which he had ſo imprudently engaged. Twenty-nine temporal peers (for the other prelates kept aloof) attended the priſoners to Weſtminſter-hall; and ſuch crowds of gentry followed the proceſſion, that ſcarcely was any room left for the populace to enter. The lawyers for the biſhops were ſir Robert Sawyer, ſir Francis Pemberton, Pollexfen, Treby, and Sommers. No cauſe, even during the proſecution of the popiſh plot, was ever heard with ſo much zeal and attention. The popular torrent, which, of itſelf, ran fierce and ſtrong, was now farther irritated by the oppoſition of government.

THE counſel for the biſhops pleaded, that the law allowed ſubjects, if they thought themſelves aggrieved in any particular, to apply by petition to the king, provided they kept within certain bounds, which the ſame law preſcribed to them, and which, in the preſent petition, the prelates had ſtrictly obſerved: That an active obedience in caſes which were contrary to conſcience, was never pretended to be due to government; and law was allowed to be the great meaſure of the compliance and ſubmiſſion of ſubjects: That when any perſon

perſon found commands to be impoſed upon him which he could not obey, it was more reſpectful in him to offer his reaſons for refuſal, than to remain in a ſullen and refractory ſilence: That it was no breach of duty in ſubjects, even though not called upon, to diſcover their ſenſe of public meaſures, in which every one had ſo intimate a concern: That the biſhops in the preſent caſe were called upon, and muſt either expreſs their approbation by compliance, or their diſapprobation by petition: That it could be no ſedition to deny the prerogative of ſuſpending the laws; becauſe there really was no ſuch prerogative, nor ever could be, in a legal and limited government: That even if this prerogative were real, it had yet been frequently controverted before the whole nation, both in Weſtminſter-hall, and in both houſes of parliament; and no one had ever dreamed of puniſhing the denial of it as criminal: That the prelates, inſtead of making an appeal to the people, had applied in private to his majeſty, and had even delivered their petition ſo ſecretly, that, except by the confeſſion extorted from them before the council, it was found impoſſible to prove them the authors: And that though the petition was afterwards printed and diſperſed, it was not ſo much as attempted to be proved that they had the leaſt knowledge of the publication.

THESE arguments were convincing in themſelves, and were heard with a favourable diſpoſition by the audience. Even ſome of the judges, though their ſeats were held during pleaſure, declared themſelves in favour of the priſoners. The jury, however, from what cauſe is unknown, took ſeveral hours to deliberate, and kept, during ſo long a time, the people in the moſt anxious expectation. But when the wiſhed-for verdict, *not guilty*, was at laſt pronounced, the intelligence was echoed through the hall,

17th June, and acquittal of the biſhops.

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hall, was conveyed to the crowds without, was carried into the city, and was propagated with infinite joy throughout the kingdom.

Ever ſince Monmouth's rebellion, the king had, every ſummer, encamped his army on Hounſlow-heath, that he might both improve their diſcipline, and by ſo unuſual a ſpectacle overawe the mutinous people. A popiſh chapel was openly erected in the midſt of the camp, and great pains were taken, though in vain, to bring over the ſoldiers to that communion. The few converts, whom the prieſts had made, were treated with ſuch contempt and ignominy, as deterred every one from following the example. Even the Iriſh officers, whom the king introduced into the army, ſerved rather, from the averſion borne them, to weaken his intereſt among them. It happened, that the very day on which the trial of the biſhops was finiſhed, James had reviewed the troops, and had retired into the tent of lord Feverſham, the general; when he was ſurpriſed to hear a great uproar in the camp, attended with the moſt extravagant ſymptoms of tumultuary joy. He ſuddenly inquired the cauſe, and was told by Feverſham, "It was nothing but the rejoicing of "the ſoldiers for the acquittal of the biſhops." "Do you call that nothing?" replied he, "but "ſo much the worſe for them."

The king was ſtill determined to ruſh forward in the ſame courſe, in which he was already, by his precipitate career, ſo fatally advanced. Though he knew that every order of men, except a handful of catholics, were enraged at his paſt meaſures, and ſtill more terrified with the future proſpect; though he ſaw that the ſame diſcontents had reached the army, his ſole reſource during the general diſſaffection; yet was he incapable of changing his meaſures, or even of remitting his violence in the proſecution of them. He ſtruck out two of the judges,

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Powel and Holloway, who had appeared to favour the biſhops: He iſſued orders to proſecute all thoſe clergymen who had not read his declaration; that is, the whole church of England, two hundred excepted: He ſent a mandate to the new fellows, whom he had obtruded on Magdalen college, to elect for preſident, in the room of Parker, lately deceaſed, one Gifford, a doctor of the Sorbonne, and titular biſhop of Madura: And he is even ſaid to have nominated the ſame perſon to the ſee of Oxford. So great an infatuation is perhaps an object of compaſſion rather than of anger: And is really ſurpriſing in a man who, in other reſpects, was not wholly deficient in ſenſe and accompliſhments.

A FEW days before the acquittal of the biſhops, an event happened, which, in the king's ſentiments, much overbalanced all the mortifications received on that occaſion. The queen was delivered of a ſon, who was baptiſed by the name of James. This bleſſing was impatiently longed for, not only by the king and queen, but by all the zealous catholics both abroad and at home. They ſaw, that the king was paſt middle age; and that on his death the ſucceſſion muſt devolve to the prince and princeſs of Orange, two zealous proteſtants, who would ſoon replace every thing on ancient foundations. Vows therefore were offered at every ſhrine for a male ſucceſſor: Pilgrimages were undertaken, particularly one to Loretto, by the dutcheſs of Modena; and ſucceſs was chiefly attributed to that pious journey. But in proportion as this event was agreeable to the catholics, it increaſed the diſguſt of the proteſtants, by depriving them of that pleaſing, though ſomewhat diſtant proſpect, in which at preſent they flattered themſelves. Calumny even went ſo far as to aſcribe to the king the deſign of impoſing on the world a ſuppoſititious child, who might be educated in his principles, and after his death

10th June. Birth of the prince of Wales.

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ſupport the catholic religion in his dominions. The nation almoſt univerſally believed him capable, from bigotry, of committing any crime; as they had ſeen, that, from like motives, he was guilty of every imprudence: And the affections of nature, they thought, would be eaſily ſacrificed to the ſuperior motive of propagating a catholic and orthodox faith. The preſent occaſion was not the firſt, when that calumny had been invented. In the year 1682, the queen, then dutcheſs of York, had been pregnant; and rumours were ſpread that an impoſture would at that time be obtruded upon the nation: But happily, the infant proved a female, and thereby ſpared the party all the trouble of ſupporting their improbable fiction °.

° This ſtory is taken notice of in a weekly paper, the Obſervator, publiſhed at that very time, 23d of Auguſt 1682. Party zeal is capable of ſwallowing the moſt incredible ſtory; but it is ſurely ſingular, that the ſame calumny, when once baffled, ſhould yet be renewed with ſuch ſucceſs.

CHAP. LXXI.

Conduct of the prince of Orange——He forms a league againſt France—refuſes to concur with the king—reſolves to oppoſe the king——Is applied to by the Engliſh——Coalition of parties——Prince's preparations——Offers of France to the king—rejected——Suppoſed league with France——General diſcontents——The king retracts his meaſures——Prince's declaration——The prince lands in England——General commotion——Deſertion of the army—and of prince George—and of the princeſs Anne——King's conſternation—and flight——General confuſion——King ſeized at Feverſham——Second eſcape——King's character——Convention ſummoned——Settlement of Scotland——Engliſh convention meets——Views of the parties——Free conference between the houſes——Commons prevail——Settlement of the crown——Manners and ſciences.

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WHILE every motive, civil and religious, concurred to alienate from the king every rank and denomination of men, it might be expected that his throne would, without delay, fall to pieces by its own weight: But ſuch is the influence of eſtabliſhed government; ſo averſe are men from beginning hazardous enterpriſes; that, had not an attack been made from abroad, affairs might long have remained in their preſent delicate ſituation, and James might at laſt have prevailed in his raſh and ill-concerted projects.

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1688. Conduct of the prince of Orange.

THE prince of Orange, ever ſince his marriage with the lady Mary, had maintained a very prudent conduct; agreeably to that ſound underſtanding with which he was ſo eminently endowed. He made it a maxim to concern himſelf little in Engliſh affairs, and never by any meaſure to diſguſt any of the factions, or give umbrage to the prince who filled the throne. His natural inclination, as well as his intereſt, led him to employ himſelf with aſſiduous induſtry in the tranſactions on the continent, and to oppoſe the grandeur of the French monarch, againſt whom he had long, both from perſonal and political conſiderations, conceived a violent animoſity. By this conduct, he gratified the prejudices of the whole Engliſh nation: But as he croſſed the inclinations of Charles, who ſought peace by compliance with France, he had much declined in the favour and affections of that monarch.

JAMES on his acceſſion found it ſo much his intereſt to live on good terms with the heir apparent, that he ſhowed the prince ſome demonſtrations of friendſhip; and the prince, on his part, was not wanting in every inſtance of duty and regard towards the king. On Monmouth's invaſion, he immediately diſpatched over ſix regiments of Britiſh troops, which were in the Dutch ſervice; and he offered to take the command of the king's forces againſt the rebels. How little ſoever he might approve of James's adminiſtration, he always kept a total ſilence on the ſubject, and gave no countenance to thoſe diſcontents which were propagated with ſuch induſtry throughout the nation.

IT was from the application of James himſelf, that the prince firſt openly took any part in Engliſh affairs. Notwithſtanding the lofty ideas which the king had entertained of his prerogative, he found that the edicts emitted from it ſtill wanted much of the authority of laws, and that the continuance

of

of them might in the iſſue become dangerous, both to himſelf and to the catholics, whom he deſired to favour. An act of parliament alone could inſure the indulgence or toleration, which he had laboured to eſtabliſh; and he hoped that, if the prince would declare in favour of that ſcheme, the members, who had hitherto reſiſted all his own applications, would at laſt be prevailed with to adopt it. The conſent, therefore, of the prince to the repeal of the penal ſtatutes and of the teſt was ſtrongly ſolicited by the king; and in order to engage him to agree to that meaſure, hopes were given[p], that England would ſecond him in all thoſe enterpriſes which his active and extenſive genius had with ſuch ſucceſs planned on the continent. He was at this time the centre of all the negotiations of Chriſtendom.

He forms a league againſt France.

The emperor and the king of Spain, as the prince well knew, were enraged by the repeated injuries which they had ſuffered from the ambition of Lewis, and ſtill more by the frequent inſults which his pride had made them undergo. He was appriſed of the influence of theſe monarchs over the catholic princes of the empire: He had himſelf acquired great authority with the proteſtants: And he formed a project of uniting Europe in one general league againſt the encroachments of France, which ſeemed ſo nearly to threaten the independence of all its neighbours.

No characters are more incompatible than thoſe of a conqueror and a perſecutor; and Lewis ſoon found, that beſides his weakening France by the baniſhment of ſo many uſeful ſubjects, the refugees had inflamed all the proteſtant nations againſt him, and had raiſed him enemies who, in defence of their religion as well as liberty, were obſtinately reſolved to oppoſe his progreſs. The city of Am-

[p] Burnet, vol. i. p. 711. D'Avaux, 15th of April 1688.

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ſterdam and other towns in Holland, which had before fallen into a dependance on France, being terrified with the accounts which they every moment received, of the furious perſecutions againſt the Hugonots, had now dropped all domeſtic faction, and had entered into an entire confidence with the prince of Orange[q]. The proteſtant princes of the empire formed a ſeparate league at Magdebourg for the defence of their religion. The Engliſh were anew enraged at the blind bigotry of their ſovereign, and were diſpoſed to embrace the moſt deſperate reſolutions againſt him. From a view of the ſtate of Europe during this period, it appears, that Lewis, beſides ſullying an illuſtrious reign, had wantonly by this perſecution raiſed invincible barriers to his arms, which otherwiſe it had been difficult, if not impoſſible, to reſiſt.

THE prince of Orange knew how to avail himſelf of all theſe advantages. By his intrigues and influence there was formed at Augſbourg a league, in which the whole empire united for its defence againſt the French monarch. Spain and Holland became parties in the alliance. The acceſſion of Savoy was afterwards obtained. Sweden and Denmark ſeemed to favour the ſame cauſe. But though theſe numerous ſtates compoſed the greater part of Europe, the league was ſtill deemed imperfect and unequal to its end, ſo long as England maintained that neutrality, in which ſhe had hitherto perſevered.

JAMES, though more prone to bigotry, was more ſenſible to his own and to national honour than his brother; and had he not been reſtrained by the former motive, he would have maintained with more ſpirit the intereſts and independence of his kingdoms. When a proſpect, therefore, appeared

[q] D'Avaux, 24th of July 1681; 10th of June, 15th of October, 11th of November, 1688; vol. iv. p. 30.

of

of effecting his religious ſchemes by oppoſing the progreſs of France, he was not averſe to that meaſure; and he gave his ſon-in-law room to hope, that, by concurring with his views in England, he might prevail with him to ſecond thoſe projects which the prince was ſo ambitious of promoting.

Refuſes to concur with the king.

A MORE tempting offer could not be made to a perſon of his enterpriſing character: But the objections to that meaſure, upon deliberation, appeared to him unſurmountable. The king, he obſerved, had incurred the hatred of his own ſubjects: Great apprehenſions were entertained of his deſigns: The only reſource which the nation ſaw, was in the future ſucceſſion of the prince and princeſs: Should *he* concur in thoſe dreaded meaſures, he ſhould draw on himſelf all the odium under which the king laboured: The nation might even refuſe to bear the expence of alliances, which would in that caſe become ſo ſuſpicious: And he might himſelf incur danger of loſing a ſucceſſion which was awaiting him, and which the egregious indiſcretion of the king ſeemed even to give him hopes of reaping, before it ſhould devolve to him by the courſe of nature. The prince, therefore, would go no farther than to promiſe his conſent to the repeal of the penal ſtatutes, by which the non-conformiſts as well as catholics were expoſed to puniſhment: The teſt he deemed a ſecurity abſolutely neceſſary for the eſtabliſhed religion.

THE king did not remain ſatisfied with a ſingle trial. There was one Stuart, a Scotch lawyer, who had been baniſhed for pretended treaſonable practices; but who had afterwards obtained a pardon, and had been recalled. By the king's directions, Stuart wrote ſeveral letters to penſionary Fagel, with whom he had contracted an acquaintance in Holland; and beſides urging all the motives for an unlimited toleration, he deſired that his reaſons

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ſhould, in the king's name, be communicated to the prince and princeſs of Orange. Fagel during a long time made no reply; but finding that his ſilence was conſtrued into an aſſent, he at laſt expreſſed his own ſentiments and thoſe of their Highneſſes. He ſaid, that it was their fixed opinion, that no man, merely becauſe he differed from the eſtabliſhed faith, ſhould ever, while he remained a peaceable ſubject, be expoſed to any puniſhment or even vexation. That the prince and princes gave heartily their conſent for repealing legally all the penal ſtatutes, as well thoſe which had been enacted againſt the catholics as againſt the proteſtant nonconformiſts; and would concur with the king in any meaſure for that purpoſe. That the teſt was not to be conſidered as a penalty inflicted on the profeſſors of any religion, but as a ſecurity provided for the eſtabliſhed worſhip. That it was no puniſhment on men to be excluded from public offices, and to live peaceably on their own revenues or induſtry. That even in the United Provinces, which were ſo often cited as models of toleration, though all ſects were admitted, yet civil offices were enjoyed by the profeſſors of the eſtabliſhed religion alone. That military commands, indeed, were ſometimes beſtowed on catholics; but as they were conferred with great precaution, and ſtill lay under the control of the magiſtrate, they could give no juſt reaſon for umbrage. And that their Highneſſes, however deſirous of gratifying the king, and of endeavouring, by every means, to render his reign peaceable and happy, could not agree to any meaſure which would expoſe their religion to ſuch imminent danger.

When this letter was publiſhed, as it ſoon was, it inſpired great courage into the proteſtants of all denominations, and ſerved to keep them united in their oppoſition to the encroachments of the catholics.

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On the other hand, the king, who was not content with a ſimple toleration for his own religion, but was reſolved that it ſhould enjoy great credit, if not an abſolute ſuperiority, was extremely diſguſted, and took every occaſion to expreſs his diſpleaſure, as well againſt the prince of Orange as the United Provinces. He gave the Algerine pirates, who preyed on the Dutch, a reception in his harbours, and liberty to diſpoſe of their prizes. He revived ſome complaints of the Eaſt India company with regard to the affair of Bantam[r]. He required the ſix Britiſh regiments in the Dutch ſervice to be ſent over. He began to put his navy in a formidable condition. And from all his movements, the Hollanders entertained apprehenſions, that he ſought only an occaſion and pretence for making war upon them.

Reſolves to oppoſe the king.

THE prince in his turn reſolved to puſh affairs with more vigour, and to preſerve all the Engliſh proteſtants in his intereſts, as well as maintain them firm in their preſent union againſt the catholics. He knew that men of education in England were, many of them, retained in their religion more by honour than by principle[s]; and that, though every one was aſhamed to be the firſt proſelyte, yet if the example were once ſet by ſome eminent perſons, intereſt would every day make conſiderable converſions to a communion, which was ſo zealouſly encouraged by the ſovereign. Dykvelt therefore was ſent over as envoy to England; and the prince gave him inſtructions, beſides publicly remonſtrating on the conduct of affairs both at home and abroad, to apply in his name, after a proper manner, to every ſect and denomination. To the church party he ſent aſſurances of favour and regard, and proteſted, that his education in Holland had nowiſe

[r] D'Avaux, 21ſt of January 1687. [s] Burnet.

prejudiced

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prejudiced him againſt epiſcopal government. The non-conformiſts were exhorted not to be deceived by the fallacious careſſes of a popiſh court, but to wait patiently till, in the fulneſs of time, laws enacted by proteſtants, ſhould give them that toleration which, with ſo much reaſon, they had long demanded. Dykvelt executed his commiſſion with ſuch dexterity, that all orders of men caſt their eyes towards Holland, and expected thence a deliverance from thoſe dangers with which their religion and liberty were ſo nearly threatened.

Is applied to by the Engliſh.

MANY of the moſt conſiderable perſons, both in church and ſtate, made ſecret applications to Dykvelt, and through him to the prince of Orange. Admiral Herbert too, though a man of great expence, and ſeemingly of little religion, had thrown up his employments, and had retired to the Hague, where he aſſured the prince of the diſaffection of the ſeamen, by whom that admiral was extremely beloved. Admiral Ruſſel, couſin-german to the unfortunate lord of that name, paſſed frequently between England and Holland, and kept the communication open with all the great men of the proteſtant party. Henry Sidney, brother to Algernon, and uncle to the earl of Sunderland, came over under pretence of drinking the waters at Spaw, and conveyed ſtill ſtronger aſſurances of an univerſal combination againſt the meaſures of the king. Lord Dumblaine, ſon of the earl of Danby, being maſter of a frigate, made ſeveral voyages to Holland, and carried from many of the nobility tenders of duty, and even conſiderable ſums of money[t], to the prince of Orange.

THERE remained, however, ſome reaſons, which retained all parties in awe, and kept them from breaking out into immediate hoſtility. The prince,

[t] D'Avaux, 14th and 24th of September, 8th and 15th of October, 1688.

on

on the one hand, was afraid of hazarding, by violent meaſures, an inheritance which the laws enſured to the princeſs; and the Engliſh proteſtants, on the other, from the proſpect of her ſucceſſion, ſtill entertained hopes of obtaining at laſt a peaceable and a ſafe redreſs of all their grievances. But when a ſon was born to the king, both the prince and the Engliſh nation were reduced to deſpair, and ſaw no reſource but in a confederacy for their mutual intereſts. And thus the event, which James had ſo long made the object of his moſt ardent prayers, and from which he expected the firm eſtabliſhment of his throne, proved the immediate cauſe of his ruin and downfal.

ZUYLESTEIN, who had been ſent over to congratulate the king on the birth of his ſon, brought back to the prince invitations from moſt of the great men in England, to aſſiſt them, by his arms, in the recovery of their laws and liberties. The biſhop of London, the earls of Danby, Nottingham, Devonſhire, Dorſet, the duke of Norfolk, the lords Lovelace, Delamere, Paulet, Eland, Mr. Hambden, Powle, Leſter, beſides many eminent citizens of London; all theſe perſons, though of oppoſite parties, concurred in their applications to the prince. The whigs, ſuitably to their ancient principles of liberty, which had led them to attempt the excluſion bill, eaſily agreed to oppoſe a king, whoſe conduct had juſtified whatever his worſt enemies had prognoſticated concerning his ſucceſſion. The tories and the church party, finding their paſt ſervices forgotten, their rights invaded, their religion threatened, agreed to drop for the preſent all over-ſtrained doctrines of ſubmiſſion, and attend to the great and powerful dictates of nature. The non-conformiſts, dreading the careſſes of known and inveterate enemies, deemed the offers of toleration more ſecure from a prince, educated in thoſe principles, and accuſtomed to that practice. And thus all faction

Coalition of parties.

was

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was for a time laid aſleep in England; and rival parties, forgetting their animoſity, had ſecretly concurred in a deſign of reſiſting their unhappy and miſguided ſovereign. The earl of Shrewſbury, who had acquired great popularity by deſerting, at this time, the catholic religion, in which he had been educated, left his regiment, mortgaged his eſtate for forty thouſand pounds, and made a tender of his ſword and purſe to the prince of Orange. Lord Wharton, notwithſtanding his age and infirmities, had taken a journey for the ſame purpoſe. Lord Mordaunt was at the Hague, and puſhed on the enterpriſe with that ardent and courageous ſpirit, for which he was ſo eminent. Even Sunderland, the king's favourite miniſter, is believed to have entered into a correſpondence with the prince; and at the expence of his own honour and his maſter's intereſts, to have ſecretly favoured a cauſe, which, he foreſaw, was likely ſoon to predominate [u].

THE prince was eaſily engaged to yield to the applications of the Engliſh, and to embrace the defence of a nation, which, during its preſent fears and diſtreſſes, regarded him as its ſole protector. The great object of his ambition was to be placed at the head of a confederate army, and by his valour to avenge the injuries, which he himſelf, his country, and his allies, had ſuſtained from the haughty Lewis. But while England remained under the preſent government, he deſpaired of ever forming a league which would be able, with any probability of ſucceſs, to make oppoſition againſt that powerful monarch. The ties of affinity could not be ſuppoſed to have great influence over a perſon of the prince's rank and temper; much more as he knew, that they were at firſt unwillingly contracted by the king, and had never ſince been cultivated by any eſſential

[u] D'Avaux was always of that opinion. See his negotiations 6th and 20th May, 18th, 27th of September, 22d of November, 1688. On the whole, that opinion is the moſt probable.

favours

favours or good offices. Or ſhould any reproach remain upon him for violating the duties of private life; the glory of delivering oppreſſed nations would, he hoped, be able, in the eyes of reaſonable men, to make ample compenſation. He could not well expect, on the commencement of his enterpriſe, that it would lead him to mount the throne of England: But he undoubtedly foreſaw, that its ſucceſs would eſtabliſh his authority in that kingdom. And ſo egregious was James's temerity, that there was no advantage, ſo great or obvious, which that prince's indiſcretion might not afford his enemies. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

THE prince of Orange, throughout his whole life, was peculiarly happy in the ſituations in which he was placed. He ſaved his own country from ruin, he reſtored the liberties of theſe kingdoms, he ſupported the general independency of Europe. And thus, though his virtue, it is confeſſed, be not the pureſt which we meet with in hiſtory, it will be difficult to find any perſon, whoſe actions and conduct have contributed more eminently to the general intereſts of ſociety and of mankind.

Prince's preparations.

THE time, when the prince entered on his enterpriſe, was well choſen; as the people were then in the higheſt ferment, on account of the inſult which the impriſonment and trial of the biſhops had put upon the church, and indeed upon all the proteſtants of the nation. His method of conducting his preparations was no leſs wiſe and politic. Under other pretences he had beforehand made conſiderable augmentations to the Dutch navy; and the ſhips were at that time lying in harbour. Some additional troops were alſo levied; and ſums of money, raiſed for other purpoſes, were diverted by the prince to the uſe of this expedition. The States had given him their entire confidence; and partly from terror of the power of France, partly from diſguſt at ſome reſtraints laid on their commerce in that kingdom, were ſenſible how neceſſary ſucceſs in

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in this enterprise was become to their domestic happiness and security. Many of the neighbouring princes regarded him as their guardian and protector, and were guided by him in all their counsels. He held conferences with Castanaga, governor of the Spanish Netherlands, with the electors of Brandenburgh and Saxony, with the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, and with the whole house of Lunenbourg. It was agreed, that these princes should replace the troops employed against England, and should protect the United Provinces during the absence of the prince of Orange. Their forces were already on their march for that purpose: A considerable encampment of the Dutch army was formed at Nimeguen: Every place was in movement; and though the roots of this conspiracy reached from one end of Europe to the other, so secret were the prince's counsels, and so fortunate was the situation of affairs, that he could still cover his preparations under other pretences; and little suspicion was entertained of his real intentions.

The king of France, menaced by the league of Augsbourg, had resolved to strike the first blow against the allies; and having sought a quarrel with the emperor and the elector palatine, he had invaded Germany with a great army, and had laid siege to Philipsbourg. The elector of Cologne, who was also bishop of Liege and Munster, and whose territories almost entirely surrounded the United Provinces, had died about this time; and the candidates for that rich succession were prince Clement of Bavaria, supported by the house of Austria, and the cardinal of Furstemberg, a prelate dependant on France. The pope, who favoured the allies, was able to throw the balance between the parties, and prince Clement was chosen; a circumstance which contributed extremely to the security of the States. But as the cardinal kept possession of many of the fortresses, and had applied to

France for ſuccour, the neighbouring territories were full of troops; and by this means the preparations of the Dutch and their allies ſeemed intended merely for their own defence againſt the different enterpriſes of Lewis.

ALL the artifices, however, of the prince could not entirely conceal his real intentions from the ſagacity of the French court. D'Avaux, Lewis's envoy at the Hague, had been able, by a compariſon of circumſtances, to trace the purpoſes of the preparations in Holland; and he inſtantly informed his maſter of this diſcovery. Lewis conveyed the intelligence to James; and accompanied the information with an important offer. He was willing to join a ſquadron of French ſhips to the Engliſh fleet; and to ſend over any number of troops, which James ſhould judge requiſite for his ſecurity. When this propoſal was rejected, he again offered to raiſe the ſiege of Philipſbourg, to march his army into the Netherlands, and by the terror of his arms to detain the Dutch forces in their own country. This propoſal met with no better reception.

Offers of France to the king,

rejected.

JAMES was not, as yet, entirely convinced, that his ſon-in-law intended an invaſion upon England. Fully perſuaded, himſelf, of the ſacredneſs of his own authority, he fancied that a like belief had made deep impreſſion on his ſubjects; and notwithſtanding the ſtrong ſymptoms of diſcontent which broke out every where, ſuch an univerſal combination in rebellion appeared to him no-wiſe credible. His army, in which he truſted, and which he had conſiderably augmented, would eaſily be able, he thought, to repel foreign force, and to ſuppreſs any ſedition among the populace. A ſmall number of French troops, joined to theſe, might tend only to breed diſcontent; and afford them a pretence for mutinying againſt foreigners, ſo much feared and hated by the nation. A great body of auxiliaries might indeed ſecure him both againſt an invaſion from

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from Holland, and againſt the rebellion of his own ſubjects; but would be able afterwards to reduce him to dependance, and render his authority entirely precarious. Even the French invaſion of the Low Countries might be attended with dangerous conſequences; and would ſuffice, in theſe jealous times, to revive the old ſuſpicion of a combination againſt Holland, and againſt the proteſtant religion; a ſuſpicion, which had already produced ſuch diſcontents in England. Theſe were the views ſuggeſted by Sunderland; and it muſt be confeſſed, that the reaſons on which they were founded, were ſufficiently plauſible; as indeed the ſituation, to which the king had reduced himſelf, was, to the laſt degree, delicate and perplexing.

STILL Lewis was unwilling to abandon a friend and ally, whoſe intereſts he regarded as cloſely connected with his own. By the ſuggeſtion of Skelton, the king's miniſter at Paris, orders were ſent to D'Avaux to remonſtrate with the States, in Lewis's name, againſt thoſe preparations which they were making to invade England. The ſtrict amity, ſaid, the French miniſter, which ſubſiſts between the two monarchs will make Lewis regard every attempt againſt his ally as an act of hoſtility againſt himſelf. This remonſtrance had a bad effect, and put the States in a flame. What is this alliance, they aſked, between France and England, which has been ſo carefully concealed from us? Is it of the ſame nature with the former; meant for our deſtruction, and for the extirpation of the proteſtant religion? If ſo, it is high time for us to provide for our own defence, and to anticipate thoſe projects which are forming againſt us.

EVEN James was diſpleaſed with this officious ſtep taken by Lewis for his ſervice. He was not reduced, he ſaid, to the condition of the cardinal of Furſtemberg, and obliged to ſeek the protection of France. He recalled Skelton, and threw him into the

the Tower for his raſh conduct. He ſolemnly diſavowed D'Avaux's memorial; and proteſted, that no alliance ſubſiſted between him and Lewis, but what was public and known to all the world. The States, however, ſtill affected to appear incredulous on that head[x]; and the Engliſh, prepoſſeſſed againſt their ſovereign, firmly believed that he had concerted a project with Lewis for their entire ſubjection. Portſmouth, it was ſaid, was to be put into the hands of that ambitious monarch: England was to be filled with French and Iriſh troops: And every man, who refuſed to embrace the Romiſh ſuperſtition, was by theſe bigoted princes devoted to certain deſtruction. 1688.

THESE ſuggeſtions were every where ſpread abroad, and tended to augment the diſcontents, of which both the fleet and army, as well as the people, betrayed every day the moſt evident ſymptoms. The fleet had begun to mutiny; becauſe Stricland, the admiral, a Roman catholic, introduced the maſs aboard his ſhip, and diſmiſſed the proteſtant chaplain. It was with ſome difficulty the ſeamen could be appeaſed; and they ſtill perſiſted in declaring, that they would not fight againſt the Dutch, whom they called friends and brethren, but would willingly give battle to the French, whom they regarded as national enemies. The king had intended to augment his army with Iriſh recruits, and he reſolved to try the experiment on the regiment of the duke of Berwic, his natural ſon: But Beaumont, the lieutenant-colonel, refuſed to admit them; and to this oppoſition five captains ſteadily adhered. They were all caſhiered; and had not the diſcon-

[x] That there really was no new alliance formed betwixt France and England appears both from Sunderland's apology, and from D'Avaux's negotiations, lately publiſhed: See vol. iv. p. 18. Eng. tranſlations, 27th of September 1687, 16th of March, 6th of May, 10th of Auguſt, 2d, 23d, and 24th of September, 5th and 7th of October, 11th of November, 1688.

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tents of the army on this occaſion become very apparent, it was reſolved to have puniſhed thoſe officers for mutiny.

THE king made a trial of the diſpoſitions of his army, in a manner ſtill more undiſguiſed. Finding oppoſition from all the civil and eccleſiaſtical orders of the kingdom, he reſolved to appeal to the military, who, if unanimous, were able alone to ſerve all his purpoſes, and to enforce univerſal obedience. His intention was to engage all the regiments, one after another, to give their conſent to the repeal of the teſt and penal ſtatutes; and accordingly, the major of Litchfield's drew out the battalion before the king, and told them, that they were required either to enter into his majeſty's views in theſe particulars, or to lay down their arms. James was ſurpriſed to find that, two captains and a few popiſh ſoldiers excepted, the whole battalion immediately embraced the latter part of the alternative. For ſome time he remained ſpeechleſs; but having recovered from his aſtoniſhment, he commanded them to take up their arms; adding with a ſullen, diſcontented air, "That for the future, he would not do them "the honour to apply for their approbation."

WHILE the king was diſmayed with theſe ſymptoms of general diſaffection, he received a letter from
23d Sept. the marquis of Albeville, his miniſter at the Hague, which informed him with certainty, that he was ſoon to look for a powerful invaſion from Holland, and that penſionary Fagel had at length acknowledged, that the ſcope of all the Dutch naval preparations was to tranſport forces into England. Though James could reaſonably expect no other intelligence, he was aſtoniſhed at the news: He grew pale, and the letter dropped from his hand: His eyes were now opened, and he found himſelf on the brink of a frightful precipice, which his deluſions had hitherto concealed from him. His miniſters and counſellors, equally aſtoniſhed, ſaw no reſource

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reſource but in a ſudden and precipitate retraction of all thoſe fatal meaſures by which he had created to himſelf ſo many enemies, foreign and domeſtic. He paid court to the Dutch, and offered to enter into any alliance with them for common ſecurity: He replaced in all the counties the deputy-lieutenants and juſtices, who had been deprived of their commiſſions for their adherence to the teſt and the penal laws: He reſtored the charters of London, and of all the corporations: He annulled the court of eccleſiaſtical commiſſion: He took off the biſhop of London's ſuſpenſion: He reinſtated the expelled preſident and fellows of Magdalen college: And he was even reduced to careſs thoſe biſhops whom he had ſo lately proſecuted and inſulted. All theſe meaſures were regarded as ſymptoms of fear, not of repentance. The biſhops, inſtead of promiſing ſuccour, or ſuggeſting comfort, recapitulated to him all the inſtances of his mal-adminiſtration, and adviſed him thenceforwards to follow more ſalutary counſel. And as intelligence arrived of a great diſaſter which had befallen the Dutch fleet, it is commonly believed, that the king recalled, for ſome time, the conceſſions which he had made to Magdalen college: A bad ſign of his ſincerity in his other conceſſions. Nay, ſo prevalent were his unfortunate prepoſſeſſions, that, amidſt all his preſent diſtreſſes, he could not forbear, at the baptiſm of the young prince, appointing the pope to be one of the god-fathers.

The king retracts his meaſures.

The report, that a ſuppoſititious child was to be impoſed on the nation, had been widely ſpread, and greedily received, before the birth of the prince of Wales: But the king, who, without ſeeming to take notice of the matter, might eaſily have quaſhed that ridiculous rumour, had, from an ill-timed haughtineſs, totally neglected it. He diſdained, he ſaid, to ſatisfy thoſe who could deem him capable of ſo baſe and villanous an action. Finding that

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the calumny gained ground, and had made deep impreſſion on his ſubjects, he was now obliged to ſubmit to the mortifying taſk of aſcertaining the reality of the birth. Though no particular attention had been beforehand given to enſure proof, the evidence, both of the queen's pregnancy and delivery, was rendered indiſputable; and ſo much the more, as no argument or proof of any importance, nothing but popular rumour and ſurmiſe, could be thrown into the oppoſite ſcale.

Prince's declaration.

MEANWHILE, the prince of Orange's declaration was diſperſed over the kingdom, and met with univerſal approbation. All the grievances of the nation were there enumerated: The diſpenſing and ſuſpending power; the court of eccleſiaſtical commiſſion; the filling of all offices with catholics, and the raiſing of a Jeſuit to be privy-counſellor; the open encouragement given to popery, by building every where churches, colleges, and ſeminaries, for that ſect; the diſplacing of judges, if they refuſed to give ſentence according to orders received from court; the annulling of the charters of all the corporations, and the ſubjecting of elections to arbitrary will and pleaſure; the treating of petitions, even the moſt modeſt, and from perſons of the higheſt rank, as criminal and ſeditious; the committing of the whole authority of Ireland, civil and military, into the hands of papiſts; the aſſuming of an abſolute power over the religion and laws of Scotland, and openly exacting in that kingdom an obedience without reſerve; and the violent preſumptions againſt the legitimacy of the prince of Wales. In order to redreſs all theſe grievances, the prince ſaid that he intended to come over to England with an armed force, which might protect him from the king's evil counſellors: And that his ſole aim was to have a legal and free parliament aſſembled, who might provide for the ſafety and liberty of the nation, as well as examine the proofs of the prince of Wales's

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Wales's legitimacy. No one, he added, could entertain ſuch hard thoughts of him as to imagine, that he had formed any other deſign than to procure the full and laſting ſettlement of religion, liberty, and property. The force which he meant to bring with him was totally diſproportioned to any views of conqueſt; and it were abſurd to ſuſpect, that ſo many perſons of high rank, both in church and ſtate, would have given him ſo many ſolemn invitations for ſuch a pernicious purpoſe. Though the Engliſh miniſters, terrified with his enterpriſe, had pretended to redreſs ſome of the grievances complained of; there ſtill remained the foundation of all grievances, that upon which they could in an inſtant be again erected, an arbitrary and deſpotic power in the crown. And for this uſurpation there was no poſſible remedy, but by a full declaration of all the rights of the ſubject in a free parliament.

So well concerted were the prince's meaſures, that, in three days, above four hundred tranſports were hired; the army quickly fell down the rivers and canals from Nimeguen; the artillery, arms, ſtores, and horſes, were embarked; and the prince ſet ſail from Helvoet-Sluice, with a fleet of near five hundred veſſels, and an army of above fourteen thouſand men. He firſt encountered a ſtorm, which drove him back: But his loſs being ſoon repaired, the fleet put to ſea under the command of admiral Herbert, and made ſail with a fair wind towards the weſt of England. The ſame wind detained the king's fleet in their ſtation near Harwich, and enabled the Dutch to paſs the ſtreights of Dover without oppoſition. Both ſhores were covered with multitudes of people, who, beſides admiring the grandeur of the ſpectacle, were held in anxious ſuſpenſe by the proſpect of an enterpriſe, the moſt important, which, during ſome ages, had been undertaken in Europe. The prince had a proſperous

21ſt of October.

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voyage, and landed his army ſafely in Torbay on the fifth of November, the anniverſary of the gun-powder-treaſon.

THE Dutch army marched firſt to Exeter; and the prince's declaration was there publiſhed. That whole county was ſo terrified with the executions which had enſued upon Monmouth's rebellion, that no one for ſeveral days joined the prince. The biſhop of Exeter in a fright fled to London, and carried to court intelligence of the invaſion. As a reward of his zeal, he received the archbiſhopric of York, which had long been kept vacant, with an intention, as was univerſally believed, of beſtowing it on ſome catholic. The firſt perſon who joined the prince was major Burrington; and he was quickly followed by the gentry of the counties of Devon and Somerſet. Sir Edward Seymour made propoſals for an aſſociation, which every one ſigned. By degrees, the earl of Abingdon, Mr. Ruſſel, ſon of the earl of Bedford, Mr. Wharton, Godfrey, Howe, came to Exeter. All England was in commotion. Lord Delamere took arms in Cheſhire, the earl of Danby ſeized York, the earl of Bath, governor of Plymouth, declared for the prince, the earl of Devonſhire made a like declaration in Derby. The nobility and gentry of Nottinghamſhire embraced the ſame cauſe; and every day there appeared ſome effect of that univerſal combination into which the nation had entered againſt the meaſures of the king. Even thoſe who took not the field againſt him, were able to embarraſs and confound his counſels. A petition for a free parliament was ſigned by twenty-four biſhops and peers of the greateſt diſtinction, and was preſented to the king. No one thought of oppoſing or reſiſting the invader.

General commotion.

BUT the moſt dangerous ſymptom was the diſaffection which from the general ſpirit of the nation, not from any particular reaſon, had creeped into the army. The officers ſeemed all diſpoſed to pre-

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fer the intereſts of their country and of their religion to thoſe principles of honour and fidelity, which are commonly eſteemed the moſt ſacred ties by men of that profeſſion. Lord Colcheſter, ſon of the earl of Rivers, was the firſt officer that deſerted to the prince; and he was attended by a few of his troops. Lord Lovelace made a like effort; but was intercepted by the militia under the duke of Beaufort, and taken priſoner: Lord Cornbury, ſon of the earl of Clarendon, was more ſucceſsful. He attempted to carry over three regiments of cavalry; and he actually brought a conſiderable part of them to the prince's quarters. Several officers of diſtinction informed Feverſham, the general, that they could not in conſcience fight againſt the prince of Orange.

1688. Deſertion of the army,

Lord Churchill had been raiſed from the rank of a page, had been inveſted with a high command in the army, had been created a peer, and had owed his whole fortune to the king's favour: Yet even he could reſolve, during the preſent extremity, to deſert his unhappy maſter, who had ever repoſed entire confidence in him. He carried with him the duke of Grafton, natural ſon of the late king, colonel Berkeley, and ſome troops of dragoons. This conduct was a ſignal ſacrifice to public virtue of every duty in private life; and required, ever after, the moſt upright, diſintereſted, and public-ſpirited behaviour, to render it juſtifiable.

The king had arrived at Saliſbury, the head-quarters of his army, when he received this fatal intelligence. That prince, though a ſevere enemy, had ever appeared a warm, ſteady, and ſincere friend; and he was extremely ſhocked with this, as with many other inſtances of ingratitude, to which he was now expoſed. There remained none in whom he could confide. As the whole army had diſcovered ſymptoms of diſcontent, he concluded it full of treachery; and being deſerted by thoſe whom he had moſt favoured and obliged, he no longer ex-

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pected that others would hazard their lives in his ſervice. During this diſtraction and perplexity, he embraced a ſudden reſolution of drawing off his army, and retiring towards London: A meaſure which could only ſerve to betray his fears, and provoke farther treachery.

25th of November.

But Churchill had prepared a ſtill more mortal blow for his diſtreſſed benefactor. His lady and he had an entire aſcendant over the family of prince George of Denmark; and the time now appeared ſeaſonable for overwhelming the unhappy king, who was already ſtaggering with the violent ſhocks which he had received. Andover was the firſt ſtage of James's retreat towards London; and there prince George, together with the young duke of Ormond[a], ſir George Huet, and ſome other perſons of diſtinction, deſerted him in the night-time, and retired to the prince's camp. No ſooner had this news reached London, than the princeſs Anne, pretending fear of the king's diſpleaſure, withdrew herſelf in company with the biſhop of London and lady Churchill. She fled to Nottingham; where the earl of Dorſet received her with great reſpect, and the gentry of the county quickly formed a troop for her protection.

and of prince George,

and of the princeſs Anne.

The late king, in order to gratify the nation, had entruſted the education of his nieces entirely to proteſtants; and as theſe princeſſes were deemed the chief reſource of the eſtabliſhed religion after their father's defection, great care had been taken to inſtil into them, from their earlieſt infancy, the ſtrongeſt prejudices againſt popery. During the violence too of ſuch popular currents, as now prevailed in England, all private conſiderations are commonly loſt in the general paſſion; and the more principle any perſon poſſeſſes, the more apt is he,

[a] His grandfather, the firſt duke of Ormond, had died this year, on the 21ſt of July.

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on ſuch occaſions, to neglect and abandon his domeſtic duties. Though theſe cauſes may account for the behaviour of the princeſs, they had nowiſe prepared the king to expect ſo aſtoniſhing an event. He burſt into tears, when the firſt intelligence of it was conveyed to him. Undoubtedly he foreſaw in this incident the total expiration of his royal authority: But the nearer and more intimate concern of a parent laid hold of his heart; when he found himſelf abandoned in his uttermoſt diſtreſs by a child, and a virtuous child, whom he had ever regarded with the moſt tender affection. "God help "me," cried he, in the extremity of his agony, "my own children have forſaken me!" It is indeed ſingular, that a prince whoſe chief blame conſiſted in imprudences, and miſguided principles, ſhould be expoſed, from religious antipathy, to ſuch treatment as even Nero, Domitian, or the moſt enormous tyrants that have diſgraced the records of hiſtory, never met with from their friends and family.

King's conſternation,

So violent were the prejudices which at this time prevailed, that this unhappy father, who had been deſerted by his favourite child, was believed, upon her diſappearing, to have put her to death: And it was fortunate, that the truth was timely diſcovered; otherwiſe the populace, even the king's guards themſelves, might have been engaged, in revenge, to commence a maſſacre of the prieſts and catholics.

THE king's fortune now expoſed him to the contempt of his enemies; and his behaviour was not ſuch as could gain him the eſteem of his friends and adherents. Unable to reſiſt the torrent, he preſerved not preſence of mind in yielding to it; but ſeemed in this emergence as much depreſſed with adverſity, as he had before been vainly elated by proſperity. He called a council of all the peers and prelates who were in London; and followed

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their advice in iſſuing writs for a new parliament, and in ſending Halifax, Nottingham, and Godolphin, as commiſſioners to treat with the prince of Orange. But theſe were the laſt acts of royal authority which he exerted. He even hearkened to imprudent counſel, by which he was prompted to deſert the throne, and to gratify his enemies beyond what their fondeſt hopes could have promiſed them.

THE queen obſerving the fury of the people, and knowing how much ſhe was the object of general hatred, was ſtruck with the deepeſt terror, and began to apprehend a parliamentary impeachment, from which, ſhe was told, the queens of England were not exempted. The popiſh courtiers, and above all, the prieſts, were aware, that they ſhould be the firſt ſacrifice, and that their perpetual baniſhment was the ſmalleſt penalty which they muſt expect from national reſentment. They were, therefore, deſirous of carrying the king along with them; whoſe preſence, they knew, would ſtill be ſome reſource and protection to them in foreign countries, and whoſe reſtoration, if it ever happened, would again reinſtate them in power and authority. The general defection of the proteſtants made the king regard the catholics as his only ſubjects, on whoſe counſel he could rely; and the fatal cataſtrophe of his father afforded them a plauſible reaſon for making him apprehend a like fate. The great difference of circumſtances was not, during men's preſent diſtractions, ſufficiently weighed. Even after the people were inflamed by a long civil war, the execution of Charles I. could not be deemed a national deed: It was perpetrated by a fanatical army, puſhed on by a daring and enthuſiaſtical leader; and the whole kingdom had ever entertained, and did ſtill entertain, a violent abhorrence againſt that enormity. The ſituation of public affairs, therefore, no more reſembled what it was forty years be-

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fore, than the prince of Orange, either in birth, character, fortune, or connexions, could be ſuppoſed a parallel to Cromwel.

THE emiſſaries of France, and among the reſt, Barillon, the French ambaſſador, were buſy about the king; and they had entertained a very falſe notion, which they inſtilled into him, that nothing would more certainly retard the public ſettlement, and beget univerſal confuſion, than his deſerting the kingdom. The prince of Orange had with good reaſon embraced a contrary opinion; and he deemed it extremely difficult to find expedients for ſecuring the nation, ſo long as the king kept poſſeſſion of the crown. Actuated, therefore, by this public motive, and no leſs, we may well preſume, by private ambition, he was determined to uſe every expedient which might intimidate the king, and make him quit that throne which he himſelf was alone enabled to fill. He declined a perſonal conference with James's commiſſioners, and ſent the earls of Clarendon and Oxford to treat with them: The terms which he propoſed, implied almoſt a preſent participation of the ſovereignty: And he ſtopped not a moment the march of his army towards London.

THE news which the king received from all quarters, ſerved to continue the panic into which he was fallen, and which his enemies expected to improve to their advantage. Colonel Copel, deputy governor of Hull, made himſelf maſter of that important fortreſs; and threw into priſon lord Langdale, the governor, a catholic; together with lord Montgomery, a nobleman of the ſame religion. The town of Newcaſtle received lord Lumley, and declared for the prince of Orange and a free parliament. The duke of Norfolk, lord lieutenant of the county of that name, engaged it in the ſame meaſure. The prince's declaration was read at Oxford

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ford by the duke of Ormond, and was received with great applauſe by that loyal univerſity, who alſo made an offer of their plate to the prince. Every day, ſome perſon of quality or diſtinction, and among the reſt the duke of Somerſet, went over to the enemy. A violent declaration was diſperſed in the prince's name, but without his participation; in which every one was commanded to ſeize and puniſh all papiſts, who, contrary to law, pretended either to carry arms, or exerciſe any act of authority. It may not be unworthy of notice, that a merry ballad, called Lilliballero, being at this time publiſhed in deriſion of the papiſts and the Iriſh, it was greedily received by the people, and was ſung by all ranks of men, even by the king's army, who were ſtrongly ſeized with the national ſpirit. This incident both diſcovered, and ſerved to increaſe, the general diſcontent of the kingdom.

THE contagion of mutiny and diſobedience had alſo reached Scotland, whence the regular forces, contrary to the advice of Balcarras, the treaſurer, were withdrawn, in order to reinforce the Engliſh army. The marquis of Athole, together with viſcount Tarbat, and others, finding the opportunity favourable, began to form intrigues againſt Perth, the chancellor; and the preſbyterians and other malcontents flocked from all quarters to Edinburgh. The chancellor, apprehenſive of the conſequences, found it expedient to abſcond; and the populace, as if that event were a ſignal for their inſurrection, immediately roſe in arms, and rifled the popiſh chapel in the king's palace. All the catholics, even all the zealous royaliſts, were obliged to conceal themſelves; and the privy council, inſtead of their former ſubmiſſive ſtrains of addreſs to the king, and violent edicts againſt their fellow-ſubjects, now made applications to the prince of Orange, as the reſtorer of law and liberty.

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THE king, every moment alarmed, more and more, by theſe proofs of a general diſaffection, not daring to repoſe truſt in any but thoſe who were expoſed to more danger than himſelf, agitated by diſdain towards ingratitude, by indignation againſt diſloyalty, impelled by his own fears and thoſe of others, precipitately embraced the reſolution of eſcaping into France; and he ſent off beforehand the queen and the infant prince, under the conduct of count Lauzun, an old favourite of the French monarch. He himſelf diſappeared in the night-time, attended only by ſir Edward Hales; and made the beſt of his way to a ſhip which waited for him near the mouth of the river. As if this meaſure had not been the moſt grateful to his enemies of any that he could adopt, he had carefully concealed his intention from all the world; and nothing could equal the ſurpriſe which ſeized the city, the court, and the kingdom, upon the diſcovery of this ſtrange event. Men beheld, all of a ſudden, the reins of government thrown up by the hand which held them; and ſaw none, who had any right or even pretenſion, to take poſſeſſion of them.

and flight, 12th Dec.

THE more effectually to involve every thing in confuſion, the king appointed not any one, who ſhould, in his abſence, exerciſe any part of the adminiſtration; he threw the great ſeal into the river; and he recalled all thoſe writs which had been iſſued for the election of the new parliament. It is often ſuppoſed, that the ſole motive which impelled him to this ſudden deſertion, was his reluctance to meet a free parliament, and his reſolution not to ſubmit to thoſe terms which his ſubjects would deem requiſite for the ſecurity of their liberties and their religion. But it muſt be conſidered, that his ſubjects had firſt deſerted him, and entirely loſt his confidence; that he might reaſonably be ſuppoſed to entertain fears for his liberty, if not for his life; and

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and that the conditions would not probably be moderate, which the nation, ſenſible of his inflexible temper, enraged with the violation of their laws and the danger of their religion, and foreſeeing his reſentment on account of their paſt reſiſtance, would, in his preſent circumſtances, exact from him.

By this temporary diſſolution of government, the populace were maſters; and there was no diſorder which, during their preſent ferment, might not be dreaded from them. They roſe in a tumult and deſtroyed all the maſs-houſes. They even attacked and rifled the houſes of the Florentine envoy and Spaniſh ambaſſador, where many of the catholics had lodged their moſt valuable effects. Jefferies, the chancellor, who had diſguiſed himſelf, in order to fly the kingdom, was diſcovered by them, and ſo abuſed, that he died a little after. Even the army which ſhould have ſuppreſſed thoſe tumults, would, it was apprehended, ſerve rather to increaſe the general diſorder. Feverſham had no ſooner heard of the king's flight, than he diſbanded the troops in the neighbourhood, and without either diſarming or paying them, let them looſe to prey upon the country.

In this extremity, the biſhops and peers, who were in town, being the only remaining authority of the ſtate (for the privy council, compoſed of the king's creatures, was totally diſregarded), thought proper to aſſemble, and to interpoſe for the preſervation of the community. They choſe the marquis of Halifax ſpeaker: They gave directions to the mayor and aldermen for keeping the peace of the city: They iſſued orders, which were readily obeyed, to the fleet, the army, and all the garriſons: And they made applications to the prince of Orange, whoſe enterpriſe they highly applauded, and whoſe ſucceſs they joyfully congratulated.

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THE prince, on his part, was not wanting to the tide of ſucceſs, which flowed in upon him, nor backward in aſſuming that authority which the preſent exigency had put into his hands. Beſides the general popularity attending his cauſe, a new incident made his approach to London ſtill more grateful. In the preſent trepidation of the people, a rumour aroſe, either from chance or deſign, that the diſbanded Iriſh had taken arms, and had commenced an univerſal maſſacre of the proteſtants. This ridiculous belief was ſpread all over the kingdom in one day; and begat every where the deepeſt conſternation. The alarm bells were rung; the beacons fired; men fancied that they ſaw at a diſtance the ſmoke of the burning cities, and heard the groans of thoſe who were ſlaughtered in their neighbourhood. It is ſurpriſing, that the catholics did not all periſh, in the rage which naturally ſucceeds to ſuch popular panics.

WHILE every one, from principle, intereſt, or animoſity, turned his back on the unhappy king, who had abandoned his own cauſe, the unwelcome news arrived, that he had been ſeized by the populace at Feverſham, as he was making his eſcape in diſguiſe; that he had been much abuſed, till he was known; but that the gentry had then interpoſed and protected him, though they ſtill refuſed to conſent to his eſcape. This intelligence threw all parties into confuſion. The prince ſent Zuyleſtein with orders, that the king ſhould approach no nearer than Rocheſter; but the meſſage came too late. He was already arrived in London, where the populace, moved by compaſſion for his unhappy fate, and actuated by their own levity, had received him with ſhouts and acclamations.

King ſeized at Feverſham.

DURING the king's abode at Whitehall, little attention was paid to him by the nobility or any perſons of diſtinction. They had, all of them, been previouſly

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previouſly diſguſted on account of his blind partiality to the catholics; and they knew that they were now become criminal in his eyes, by their late public applications to the prince of Orange. He himſelf ſhewed not any ſymptom of ſpirit, nor diſcovered any intention of reſuming the reins of government, which he had once thrown aſide. His authority was now plainly expired; and as he had exerciſed his power, while poſſeſſed of it, with very precipitate and haughty counſels, he relinquiſhed it by a deſpair equally precipitate and puſillanimous.

NOTHING remained for the now ruling powers but to deliberate how they ſhould diſpoſe of his perſon. Beſides that the prince may juſtly be ſuppoſed to have poſſeſſed more generoſity than to think of offering violence to an unhappy monarch, ſo nearly related to him, he knew that nothing would ſo effectually promote his own views as the king's retiring into France, a country at all times obnoxious to the Engliſh. It was determined, therefore, to puſh him into that meaſure, which, of himſelf, he ſeemed ſufficiently inclined to embrace. The king having ſent lord Feverſham on a civil meſſage to the prince, deſiring a conference for an accommodation in order to the public ſettlement, that nobleman was put in arreſt, under pretence of his coming without a paſſport: The Dutch guards were ordered to take poſſeſſion of Whitehall, where James then reſided, and to diſplace the Engliſh: And Halifax, Shrewſbury, and Delamere, brought a meſſage from the prince, which they delivered to the king in bed after midnight, ordering him to leave his palace next morning, and to depart for Ham, a ſeat of the dutcheſs of Lauderdale's. He deſired permiſſion, which was eaſily granted, of retiring to Rocheſter, a town near the ſea-coaſt. It was perceived, that the artifice had taken effect;

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and that the king, terrified with this harſh treatment, had renewed his former reſolution of leaving the kingdom.

He lingered, however, ſome days at Rocheſter, under the protection of a Dutch guard, and ſeemed deſirous of an invitation ſtill to keep poſſeſſion of the throne. He was undoubtedly ſenſible, that, as he had at firſt truſted too much to his people's loyalty, and, in confidence of their ſubmiſſion, had offered the greateſt violence to their principles and prejudices; ſo had he, at laſt, on finding his diſappointment, gone too far in the other extreme, and had haſtily ſuppoſed them deſtitute of all ſenſe of duty or allegiance. But obſerving that the church, the nobility, the city, the country, all concurred in neglecting him, and leaving him to his own counſels, he ſubmitted to his melancholy fate; and being urged by earneſt letters from the queen, he privately embarked on board a frigate which waited for him; and he arrived ſafely at Ambleteuſe in Picardy, whence he haſtened to St. Germains. Lewis received him with the higheſt generoſity, ſympathy, and regard; a conduct which, more than his moſt ſignal victories, contributes to the honour of that great monarch.

Second eſcape. 23d Dec.

Thus ended the reign of a prince, whom, if we conſider his perſonal character rather than his public conduct, we may ſafely pronounce more unfortunate than criminal. He had many of thoſe qualities which form a good citizen: Even ſome of thoſe which, had they not been ſwallowed up in bigotry and arbitrary principles, ſerve to compoſe a good ſovereign. In domeſtic life his conduct was irreproachable, and is entitled to our approbation. Severe, but open in his enmities, ſteady in his counſels, diligent in his ſchemes, brave in his enterpriſes, faithful, ſincere, and honourable in his dealings with all men: Such was the character with which the

King's character.

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1688. duke of York mounted the throne of England. In that high ſtation, his frugality of public money was remarkable, his induſtry exemplary, his application to naval affairs ſucceſsful, his encouragement of trade judicious, his jealouſy of national honour laudable: What then was wanting to make him an excellent ſovereign? A due regard and affection to the religion and conſtitution of his country. Had he been poſſeſſed of this eſſential quality, even his middling talents, aided by ſo many virtues, would have rendered his reign honourable and happy. When it was wanting, every excellency, which he poſſeſſed, became dangerous and pernicious to his kingdoms.

THE ſincerity of this prince (a virtue on which he highly valued himſelf) has been much queſtioned in thoſe reiterated promiſes which he had made of preſerving the liberties and religion of the nation. It muſt be confeſſed, that his reign was almoſt one continued invaſion of both; yet it is known, that, to his laſt breath, he perſiſted in aſſerting, that he never meant to ſubvert the laws, or procure more than a toleration and an equality of privileges to his catholic ſubjects. This queſtion can only affect the perſonal character of the king, not our judgment of his public conduct. Though by a ſtretch of candour we ſhould admit of his ſincerity in theſe profeſſions, the people were equally juſtifiable in their reſiſtance of him. So lofty was the idea which he had entertained of his *legal* authority, that it left his ſubjects little or no right to liberty, but what was dependent on his ſovereign will and pleaſure. And ſuch was his zeal for proſelytiſm, that whatever he might at firſt have intended, he plainly ſtopped not at toleration and equality: He confined all power, encouragement, and favour, to the catholics: Converts from intereſt would ſoon have multiplied upon him: If not the greater, at leaſt the better part of the people, he would have flattered himſelf, was brought

brought over to his religion: And he would in a little time have thought it juſt, as well as pious, to beſtow on them all the public eſtabliſhments. Rigours and perſecutions againſt heretics would ſpeedily have followed; and thus liberty and the proteſtant religion would in the iſſue have been totally ſubverted; though we ſhould not ſuppoſe that James, in the commencement of his reign, had formally fixed a plan for that purpoſe. And, on the whole, allowing this king to have poſſeſſed good qualities and good intentions, his conduct ſerves only, on that very account, as a ſtronger proof, how dangerous it is to allow any prince, infected with the catholic ſuperſtition, to wear the crown of theſe kingdoms.

After this manner, the courage and abilities of the prince of Orange, ſeconded by ſurpriſing fortune, had effected the deliverance of this iſland; and with very little effuſion of blood (for only one officer of the Dutch army and a few private ſoldiers fell in an accidental ſkirmiſh) had dethroned a great prince, ſupported by a formidable fleet and a numerous army. Still the more difficult taſk remained, and what perhaps the prince regarded as not the leaſt important: The obtaining for himſelf that crown, which had fallen from the head of his father-in-law. Some lawyers, entangled in the ſubtilties and forms of their profeſſion, could think of no expedient, but that the prince ſhould claim the crown by right of conqueſt; ſhould immediately aſſume the title of ſovereign; and ſhould call a parliament, which, being thus legally ſummoned by a king in poſſeſſion, could ratify whatever had been tranſacted before they aſſembled. But this meaſure, being deſtructive of the principles of liberty, the only principles on which his future throne could be eſtabliſhed, was prudently rejected by the prince, who, finding himſelf poſſeſſed of the good-will of the nation, reſolved to leave them entirely to

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their own guidance and direction. The peers and biſhops, to the number of near ninety, made an addreſs, deſiring him to ſummon a convention by circular letters; to aſſume, in the mean time, the management of public affairs; and to concert meaſures for the ſecurity of Ireland. At the ſame time, they refuſed reading a letter, which the king had left, in order to apologize for his late deſertion, by the violence which had been put upon him. This ſtep was a ſufficient indication of their intentions with regard to that unhappy monarch.

THE prince ſeemed ſtill unwilling to act upon an authority, which might be deemed ſo imperfect: He was deſirous of obtaining a more expreſs declaration of the public conſent. A judicious expedient was fallen on for that purpoſe. All the members, who had ſitten in the houſe of commons during any parliament of Charles II. (the only parliaments whoſe election was regarded as free) were invited to meet; and to them were added the mayor, aldermen, and fifty of the common council. This was regarded as the moſt proper repreſentative of the people that could be ſummoned during the preſent emergence. They unanimouſly voted the ſame addreſs with the lords: And the prince, being thus ſupported by all the legal authority which could poſſibly be obtained in this critical juncture, wrote circular letters to the counties and corporations of England; and his orders were univerſally complied with. A profound tranquillity prevailed throughout the kingdom; and the prince's adminiſtration was ſubmitted to, as if he had ſucceeded in the moſt regular manner to the vacant throne. The fleet received his orders: The army, without murmur or oppoſition, allowed him to new-model them: And the city ſupplied him with a loan of two hundred thouſand pounds.

Convention ſummoned.

1689. THE conduct of the prince, with regard to Scotland, was founded on the ſame prudent and moderate

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1689. 7th Jan. Settlement of Scotland.

rate maxims. Finding that there were many Scotchmen of rank at that time in London, he ſummoned them together, laid before them his intentions, and aſked their advice in the preſent emergency. This aſſembly, conſiſting of thirty noblemen and about fourſcore gentlemen, choſe duke Hamilton preſident; a man who, being of a temporiſing character, was determined to pay court to the preſent authority. His eldeſt ſon, the earl of Arran, profeſſed an adherence to king James; a uſual policy in Scotland, where the father and ſon, during civil commotions, were often obſerved to take oppoſite ſides, in order to ſecure, in all events, the family from attainder. Arran propoſed to invite back the king upon conditions; but as he was vehemently oppoſed in this motion by ſir Patric Hume, and ſeconded by nobody, the aſſembly made an offer to the prince of the preſent adminiſtration, which he willingly accepted. To anticipate a little in our narration; a convention, by circular letters from the prince, was ſummoned at Edinburgh on the twenty-ſecond of March; where it was ſoon viſible, that the intereſt of the malcontents would entirely prevail. The more zealous royaliſts, regarding this aſſembly as illegal, had forborn to appear at elections; and the other party were returned for moſt places. The revolution was not, in Scotland as in England, effected by a coalition of whig and tory: The former party alone had overpowered the government, and were too much enraged by the paſt injuries which they had ſuffered, to admit of any compoſition with their former maſters. As ſoon as the purpoſe of the convention was diſcovered, the earl of Balcarras and viſcount Dundee, leaders of the tories, withdrew from Edinburgh; and the convention having paſſed a bold and deciſive vote, that king James, by his mal-adminiſtration and his abuſe of power, had *forfeited* all title to the crown, they

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made a tender of the royal dignity to the prince and princeſs of Orange.

1689. 22d Jan. Engliſh convention meets.

THE Engliſh convention was aſſembled; and it immediately appeared, that the houſe of commons, both from the prevailing humour of the people, and from the influence of preſent authority, were moſtly choſen from among the whig party. After thanks were unanimouſly given by both houſes to the prince of Orange, for the deliverance which he had brought them, a leſs deciſive vote than that of the Scottiſh convention was in a few days paſſed by a great majority of the commons, and ſent up to the peers for their concurrence. It was contained in theſe words: "That king James II. having endea-"voured to ſubvert the conſtitution of the kingdom, "by breaking the original contract between king "and people; and having, by the advice of jeſuits "and other wicked perſons, violated the fundamen-"tal laws, and withdrawn himſelf out of the king-"dom, has abdicated the government, and that the "throne is thereby vacant." This vote, when carried to the upper houſe, met with great oppoſition; of which it is here neceſſary for us to explain the cauſes.

THE tories and the high-church party, finding themſelves at once menaced with a ſubverſion of the laws and of their religion, had zealouſly promoted the national revolt, and had on this occaſion departed from thoſe principles of non-reſiſtance, of which, while the king favoured them, they had formerly made ſuch loud profeſſions. Their preſent apprehenſions had prevailed over their political tenets; and the unfortunate James, who had too much truſted to thoſe general declarations which never will be reduced to practice, found in the iſſue, that both parties were ſecretly united againſt him. But no ſooner was the danger paſt, and the general fears ſomewhat allayed, than party prejudices reſumed, in ſome degree, their former authority; and the

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1689. Views of the parties.

the tories were abaſhed at that victory, which their antagoniſts, during the late tranſactions, had obtained over them. They were inclined, therefore, to ſteer a middle courſe; and, though generally determined to oppoſe the king's return, they reſolved not to conſent to dethroning him, or altering the line of ſucceſſion. A regent with kingly power was the expedient which they propoſed; and a late inſtance in Portugal ſeemed to give ſome authority and precedent to that plan of government.

In favour of this ſcheme the tories urged, that, by the uniform tenor of the Engliſh laws, the title to the crown was ever regarded as ſacred, and could, on no account, and by no mal-adminiſtration, be forfeited by the ſovereign: That to dethrone a king and to elect his ſucceſſor, was a practice quite unknown to the conſtitution, and had a tendency to render kingly power entirely dependent and precarious: That where the ſovereign, from his tender years, from lunacy, or from other natural infirmity, was incapacitated to hold the reins of government, both the laws and former practice agreed in appointing a regent, who, during the interval, was inveſted with the whole power of the adminiſtration: That the inveterate and dangerous prejudices of king James had rendered him as unfit to ſway the Engliſh ſceptre, as if he had fallen into lunacy; and it was therefore natural for the people to have recourſe to the ſame remedy: That the election of one king was a precedent for the election of another; and the government, by that means, would either degenerate into a republic, or, what was worſe, into a turbulent and ſeditious monarchy: That the caſe was ſtill more dangerous, if there remained a prince, who claimed the crown by right of ſucceſſion, and diſputed, on ſo plauſible a ground, the title of the preſent ſovereign: That though the doctrine of non-reſiſtance might not, in every poſſible circumſtance, be abſolutely true, yet

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was the belief of it very expedient; and to eſtabliſh a government, which ſhould have the contrary principle for its baſis, was to lay a foundation for perpetual revolutions and convulſions: That the appointment of a regent was indeed expoſed to many inconveniencies; but ſo long as the line of ſucceſſion was preſerved entire, there was ſtill a proſpect of putting an end, ſome time or other, to the public diſorders: And that ſcarcely an inſtance occurred in hiſtory, eſpecially in the Engliſh hiſtory, where a diſputed title had not, in the iſſue, been attended with much greater ills, than all which the people had ſought to ſhun, by departing from the lineal ſucceſſor.

THE leaders of the whig party, on the other hand, aſſerted, that, if there were any ill in the precedent, that ill would reſult as much from eſtabliſhing a regent, as from dethroning one king, and appointing his ſucceſſor; nor would the one expedient, if wantonly and raſhly embraced by the people, be leſs the ſource of public convulſions than the other: That if the laws gave no expreſs permiſſion to depoſe the ſovereign, neither did they authoriſe reſiſting his authority, or ſeparating the power from the title: That a regent was unknown, except where the king, by reaſon of his tender age or his infirmities, was incapable of a will; and in that caſe, his will was ſuppoſed to be involved in that of the regent: That it would be the height of abſurdity to try a man for acting upon a commiſſion, received from a prince, whom we ourſelves acknowledge to be the lawful ſovereign; and no jury would decide ſo contrary both to law and common ſenſe, as to condemn ſuch a pretended criminal: That even the proſpect of being delivered from this monſtrous inconvenience was, in the preſent ſituation of affairs, more diſtant than that of putting an end to a diſputed ſucceſſion: That allowing the young prince to be the legiti-

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mate heir, he had been carried abroad; he would be educated in principles deſtructive of the conſtitution and eſtabliſhed religion; and he would probably leave a ſon, liable to the ſame inſuperable objection: That if the whole line were cut off by law, the people would in time forget or neglect their claim; an advantage which could not be hoped for, while the adminiſtration was conducted in their name, and while they were ſtill acknowledged to poſſeſs the legal title: And that a nation thus perpetually governed by regents or protectors, approached much nearer to a republic than one ſubject to monarchs, whoſe hereditary regular ſucceſſion, as well as preſent authority, was fixed and appointed by the people. CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THIS queſtion was agitated with great zeal by the oppoſite parties in the houſe of peers. The chief ſpeakers among the tories were Clarendon, Rocheſter, and Nottingham; among the whigs, Halifax and Danby. The queſtion was carried for a king by two voices only, fifty-one againſt forty-nine. All the prelates, except two, the biſhops of London and Briſtol, voted for a regent. The primate, a diſintereſted but puſillanimous man, kept at a diſtance, both from the prince's court and from parliament.

THE houſe of peers proceeded next to examine piecemeal the vote ſent up to them by the commons. They debated, "Whether there were an "original contract between king and people?" and the affirmative was carried by fifty-three againſt forty-ſix; a proof that the tories were already loſing ground. The next queſtion was, "Whether king "James had broken that original contract?" and, after a ſlight oppoſition, the affirmative prevailed. The lords proceeded to take into conſideration the word *abdicated*; and it was carried that *deſerted* was more proper. The concluding queſtion was, "Whether king James, having broken the origi-

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"nal contract, and *deſerted* the government, the "throne was thereby vacant?" This queſtion was debated with more heat and contention than any of the former; and upon a diviſion, the tories prevailed by eleven voices, and it was carried to omit the laſt article, with regard to the vacancy of the throne. The vote was ſent back to the commons with theſe amendments.

THE earl of Danby had entertained the project of beſtowing the crown ſolely upon the princeſs of Orange, and of admitting her as hereditary legal ſucceſſor to king James; paſſing by the infant prince, as illegitimate or ſuppoſititious. His change of party in the laſt queſtion gave the tories ſo conſiderable a majority in the number of voices.

Free conferences betwixt the houſes.

THE commons ſtill inſiſted on their own vote, and ſent up reaſons why the lords ſhould depart from their amendments. The lords were not convinced; and it was neceſſary to have a free conference, in order to ſettle this controverſy. Never ſurely was national debate more important, or managed by more able ſpeakers; yet is one ſurpriſed to find the topics inſiſted on by both ſides ſo frivolous; more reſembling the verbal diſputes of the ſchools, than the ſolid reaſonings of ſtateſmen and legiſlators. In public tranſactions of ſuch conſequence, the true motives which produce any meaſure are ſeldom avowed. The whigs, now the ruling party, having united with the tories, in order to bring about the revolution, had ſo much deference for their new allies, as not to inſiſt that the crown ſhould be declared *forfeited*, on account of the king's mal-adminiſtration: Such a declaration, they thought, would imply too expreſs a cenſure of the old tory principles, and too open a preference of their own. They agreed, therefore, to confound together the king's abuſing his power, and his withdrawing from the kingdom; and they called the whole

whole an *abdication*; as if he had given a virtual, though not a verbal, conſent to dethroning himſelf. The tories took advantage of this obvious impropriety, which had been occaſioned merely by the complaiſance or prudence of the whigs; and they inſiſted upon the word *deſertion*, as more ſignificant and intelligible. It was retorted on them, that however that expreſſion might be juſtly applied to the king's withdrawing himſelf, it could not, with any propriety, be extended to his violation of the fundamental laws. And thus both parties, while they warped their principles from regard to their antagoniſts, and from prudential conſiderations, loſt the praiſe of conſiſtence and uniformity.

THE managers for the lords next inſiſted, that even allowing the king's abuſe of power to be equivalent to an abdication, or, in other words, to a civil death, it could operate no otherwiſe than his voluntary reſignation, or his natural death; and could only make way for the next ſucceſſor. It was a maxim of Engliſh law, *that the throne was never vacant*; but inſtantly, upon the demiſe of one king, was filled with his legal heir, who was entitled to all the authority of his predeceſſor. And however young or unfit for government the ſucceſſor, however unfortunate in his ſituation, though he were even a captive in the hands of public enemies; yet no juſt reaſon, they thought, could be aſſigned why, without any default of his own, he ſhould loſe a crown, to which, by birth, he was fully entitled. The managers for the commons might have oppoſed this reaſoning by many ſpecious, and even ſolid arguments. They might have ſaid, that the great ſecurity for allegiance being merely opinion, any ſcheme of ſettlement ſhould be adopted, in which it was moſt probable the people would acquieſce and perſevere: That though, upon the natural death of a king, whoſe adminiſtration had been agreeable to the laws, many

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and great inconveniencies would be endured, rather than exclude his lineal ſucceſſor; yet the caſe was not the ſame, when the people had been obliged, by their revolt, to dethrone a prince whoſe illegal meaſures had, in every circumſtance, violated the conſtitution: That, in theſe extraordinary revolutions, the government reverted, in ſome degree, to its firſt principles, and the community acquired a right of providing for the public intereſt by expedients which, on other occaſions, might be deemed violent and irregular: That the recent uſe of one extraordinary remedy reconciled the people to the practice of another, and more familiariſed their minds to ſuch licenſes, than if the government had run on in its uſual tenor: And that king James, having carried abroad his ſon, as well as withdrawn himſelf, had given ſuch juſt provocation to the kingdom, had voluntarily involved it in ſuch difficulties, that the intereſts of his family were juſtly ſacrificed to the public ſettlement and tranquillity. Though theſe topics ſeem reaſonable, they were entirely forborne by the whig managers; both becauſe they implied an acknowledgment of the infant prince's legitimacy, which it was agreed to keep in obſcurity, and becauſe they contained too expreſs a condemnation of tory principles. They were content to maintain the vote of the commons by ſhifts and evaſions; and both ſides parted at laſt without coming to any agreement.

But it was impoſſible for the public to remain long in the preſent ſituation. The perſeverance, therefore, of the lower houſe obliged the lords to comply; and, by the deſertion of ſome peers to the whig party, the vote of the commons, without any alteration, paſſed by a majority of fifteen in the upper houſe, and received the ſanction of every part of the legiſlature which then ſubſiſted.

It happens unluckily for thoſe who maintain an original contract between the magiſtrate and people,

ple, that great revolutions of government, and new ſettlements of civil conſtitutions, are commonly conducted with ſuch violence, tumult, and diſorder, that the public voice can ſcarcely ever be heard; and the opinions of the citizens are at that time leſs attended to than even in the common courſe of adminiſtration. The preſent tranſactions in England, it muſt be confeſſed, are a ſingular exception to this obſervation. The new elections had been carried on with great tranquillity and freedom: The prince had ordered the troops to depart from all the towns where the voters aſſembled: A tumultuary petition to the two houſes having been promoted, he took care, though the petition was calculated for his advantage, effectually to ſuppreſs it: He entered into no intrigues, either with the electors or the members: He kept himſelf in a total ſilence, as if he had been nowiſe concerned in theſe tranſactions: And, ſo far from forming cabals with the leaders of parties, he diſdained even to beſtow careſſes on thoſe whoſe aſſiſtance might be uſeful to him. This conduct was highly meritorious, and diſcovered great moderation and magnanimity; even though the prince unfortunately, through the whole courſe of his life, and on every occaſion, was noted for an addreſs ſo cold, dry, and diſtant, that it was very difficult for him, on account of any intereſt, to ſoften or familiarize it.

At length, the prince deigned to break ſilence, and to expreſs, though in a private manner, his ſentiments on the preſent ſituation of affairs. He called together Halifax, Shrewſbury, Danby, and a few more; and he told them, that having been invited over to reſtore their liberty, he had engaged in this enterpriſe, and had at laſt happily effected his purpoſe. That it belonged to the parliament, now choſen and aſſembled with freedom, to concert meaſures for the public ſettlement; and he pretended not to interpoſe in their determinations.

That

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That he heard of ſeveral ſchemes propoſed for eſtabliſhing the government: Some inſiſted on a regent; others were deſirous of beſtowing the crown on the princeſs: It was their concern alone to chuſe the plan of adminiſtration moſt agreeable or advantageous to them. That if they judged it proper to ſettle a regent, he had no objection: He only thought it incumbent on him to inform them, that he was determined not to be the regent, nor ever to engage in a ſcheme which, he knew, would be expoſed to ſuch inſuperable difficulties. That no man could have a juſter or deeper ſenſe of the princeſs's merit than he was impreſſed with; but he would rather remain a private perſon than enjoy a crown which muſt depend on the will or life of another. And that they muſt therefore make account, if they were inclined to either of theſe two plans of ſettlement, that it would be totally out of his power to aſſiſt them in carrying it into execution; his affairs abroad were too important to be abandoned for ſo precarious a dignity, or even to allow him ſo much leiſure as would be requiſite to introduce order into their disjointed government.

THESE views of the prince were ſeconded by the princeſs herſelf, who, as ſhe poſſeſſed many virtues, was a moſt obſequious wife to a huſband, who, in the judgment of the generality of her ſex, would have appeared ſo little attractive and amiable. All conſiderations were neglected, when they came in competition with what ſhe deemed her duty to the prince. When Danby and others of her partiſans wrote her an account of their ſchemes and proceedings, ſhe expreſſed great diſpleaſure; and even tranſmitted their letters to her huſband, as a ſacrifice to conjugal fidelity. The princeſs Anne alſo concurred in the ſame plan for the public ſettlement; and being promiſed an ample revenue, was content to be poſtponed in the ſucceſſion to the crown. And as the title of her infant brother was,

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in the preſent eſtabliſhment, entirely neglected, ſhe might, on the whole, deem herſelf, in point of intereſt, a gainer by this revolution.

Settlement of the crown.

THE chief parties, therefore, being agreed, the convention paſſed a bill, in which they ſettled the crown on the prince and princeſs of Orange, the ſole adminiſtration to remain in the prince: The princeſs of Denmark to ſucceed after the death of the prince and princeſs of Orange; her poſterity after thoſe of the princeſs, but before thoſe of the prince by any other wife. The convention annexed to this ſettlement of the crown a declaration of rights, where all the points which had, of late years, been diſputed between the king and people, were finally determined; and the powers of royal prerogative were more narrowly circumſcribed and more exactly defined, than in any former period of the Engliſh government.

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Manners, arts, and ſciences.

THUS have we ſeen, through the whole courſe of four reigns, a continual ſtruggle maintained between the crown and the people: Privilege and prerogative were ever at variance: And both parties, beſide the preſent object of diſpute, had many latent claims, which, on a favourable occaſion, they produced againſt their adverſaries. Governments too ſteady and uniform, as they are ſeldom free, ſo are they, in the judgment of ſome, attended with another ſenſible inconvenience: They abate the active powers of men; depreſs courage, invention, and genius; and produce an univerſal lethargy in the people. Though this opinion may be juſt, the fluctuation and conteſt, it muſt be allowed, of the Engliſh government were, during theſe reigns, much

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much too violent both for the repoſe and ſafety of the people. Foreign affairs, at that time, were either entirely neglected, or managed to pernicious purpoſes: And in the domeſtic adminiſtration there was felt a continued fever, either ſecret or manifeſt; ſometimes the moſt furious convulſions and diſorders. The revolution forms a new epoch in the conſtitution; and was probably attended with conſequences more advantageous to the people, than barely freeing them from an exceptionable adminiſtration. By deciding many important queſtions in favour of liberty, and ſtill more, by that great precedent of depoſing one king, and eſtabliſhing a new family, it gave ſuch an aſcendant to popular principles, as has put the nature of the Engliſh conſtitution beyond all controverſy. And it may juſtly be affirmed, without any danger of exaggeration, that we, in this iſland, have ever ſince enjoyed, if not the beſt ſyſtem of government, at leaſt the moſt entire ſyſtem of liberty, that ever was known amongſt mankind.

To decry with ſuch violence, as is affected by ſome, the whole line of Stuart; to maintain, that their adminiſtration was one continued encroachment on the *inconteſtable* rights of the people; is not giving due honour to that great event, which not only put a period to their hereditary ſucceſſion, but made a new ſettlement of the whole conſtitution. The inconveniencies ſuffered by the people under the two firſt reigns of that family (for in the main they were fortunate), proceeded in a great meaſure from the unavoidable ſituation of affairs; and ſcarcely any thing could have prevented thoſe events, but ſuch vigour of genius in the ſovereign, attended with ſuch good fortune, as might have enabled him entirely to overpower the liberties of his people. While the parliaments, in thoſe reigns, were taking advantage of the neceſſities of the prince, and attempting every ſeſſion to aboliſh, or circumſcribe,

or define, ſome prerogative of the crown, and innovate in the uſual tenor of government: What could be expected, but that the prince would exert himſelf in defending, againſt ſuch inveterate enemies, an authority which, during the moſt regular courſe of the former Engliſh government, had been exerciſed without diſpute or controverſy? And though Charles II. in 1672, may with reaſon be deemed the aggreſſor, nor is it poſſible to juſtify his conduct; yet were there ſome motives, ſurely, which could engage a prince ſo ſoft and indolent, and at the ſame time ſo judicious, to attempt ſuch hazardous enterpriſes. He felt, that public affairs had reached a ſituation at which they could not poſſibly remain without ſome farther innovation. Frequent parliaments were become almoſt abſolutely neceſſary to the conducting of public buſineſs; yet theſe aſſemblies were ſtill, in the judgment of the royaliſts, much inferior in dignity to the ſovereign, whom they ſeemed better calculated to counſel than control. The crown ſtill poſſeſſed conſiderable power of oppoſing parliaments; and had not as yet acquired the means of influencing them. Hence a continual jealouſy between theſe parts of the legiſlature: Hence the inclination mutually to take advantage of each other's neceſſities: Hence the impoſſibility, under which the king lay, of finding miniſters, who could at once be ſerviceable and faithful to him. If he followed his own choice in appointing his ſervants, without regard to their parliamentary intereſt, a refractory ſeſſion was inſtantly to be expected: If he choſe them from among the leaders of popular aſſemblies, they either loſt their influence with the people, by adhering to the crown, or they betrayed the crown, in order to preſerve their influence. Neither Hambden, whom Charles I. was willing to gain at any price; nor Shafteſbury, whom Charles II. after the popiſh plot, attempted to engage in his counſels, would renounce their

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popularity for the precarious, and, as they eſteemed it, deceitful favour of the prince. The root of their authority they ſtill thought to lie in the parliament; and as the power of that aſſembly was not yet uncontrollable, they ſtill reſolved to augment it, though at the expence of the royal prerogatives.

It is no wonder that theſe events have long, by the repreſentations of faction, been extremely clouded and obſcured. No man has yet ariſen, who has paid an entire regard to truth, and has dared to expoſe her, without covering or diſguiſe, to the eyes of the prejudiced public. Even that party amongſt us, which boaſts of the higheſt regard to liberty, has not poſſeſſed ſufficient liberty of thought in this particular; nor has been able to decide impartially of their own merit, compared with that of their antagoniſts. More noble perhaps in their ends, and highly beneficial to mankind; they muſt alſo be allowed to have often been leſs juſtifiable in the means, and in many of their enterpriſes to have payed more regard to political than to moral conſiderations. Obliged to court the favour of the populace, they found it neceſſary to comply with their rage and folly; and have even, on many occaſions, by propagating calumnies, and by promoting violence, ſerved to infatuate, as well as corrupt that people, to whom they made a tender of liberty and juſtice. Charles I. was a tyrant, a papiſt, and a contriver of the Iriſh maſſacre: The church of England was relapſing faſt into idolatry: Puritaniſm was the only true religion, and the covenant the favourite object of heavenly regard. Through theſe deluſions, the party proceeded, and, what may ſeem wonderful, ſtill to the increaſe of law and liberty; till they reached the impoſture of the popiſh plot, a fiction which exceeds the ordinary bounds of vulgar credulity. But however ſingular theſe events may appear, there is really nothing altogether new in any period of modern hiſtory:

hiſtory: And it is remarkable, that tribunitian arts, though ſometimes uſeful in a free conſtitution, have uſually been ſuch as men of probity and honour could not bring themſelves either to practiſe or approve. The other faction, which, ſince the revolution, has been obliged to cultivate popularity, ſometimes found it neceſſary to employ like artifices.

THE Whig party, for a courſe of near ſeventy years, has, almoſt without interruption, enjoyed the whole authority of government; and no honours or offices could be obtained but by their countenance and protection. But this event, which, in ſome particulars, has been advantageous to the ſtate, has proved deſtructive to the truth of hiſtory, and has eſtabliſhed many groſs falſehoods, which it is unaccountable how any civilized nation could have embraced with regard to its domeſtic occurrences. Compoſitions the moſt deſpicable, both for ſtyle and matter, have been extolled, and propagated, and read; as if they had equalled the moſt celebrated remains of antiquity [y]. And forgetting that a regard to liberty, though a laudable paſſion, ought commonly to be ſubordinate to a reverence for eſtabliſhed government, the prevailing faction has celebrated only the partiſans of the former, who purſued as their object the perfection of civil ſociety, and has extolled them at the expence of their antagoniſts, who maintained thoſe maxims that are eſſential to its very exiſtence. But extremes of all kinds are to be avoided; and though no one will ever pleaſe either faction by moderate opinions, it is there we are moſt likely to meet with truth and certainty.

WE ſhall ſubjoin to this general view of the Engliſh government, ſome account of the ſtate of the finances, arms, trade, manners, arts, between the reſtoration and revolution.

[y] Such as Rapin Thoyras, Locke, Sidney, Hoadley, &c.

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THE revenue of Charles II. as ſettled by the long parliament, was put upon a very bad footing. It was too ſmall, if they intended to make him independent in the common courſe of his adminiſtration: It was too large, and ſettled during too long a period, if they reſolved to keep him in entire dependance. The great debts of the republic, which were thrown upon that prince; the neceſſity of ſupplying the naval and military ſtores, which were entirely exhauſted[z]; that of repairing and furniſhing his palaces: All theſe cauſes involved the king in great difficulties immediately after his reſtoration; and the parliament was not ſufficiently liberal in ſupplying him. Perhaps too he had contracted ſome debts abroad; and his bounty to the diſtreſſed cavaliers, though it did not correſpond either to their ſervices or expectations, could not fail, in ſome degree, to exhauſt his treaſury. The extraordinary ſums granted the king during the firſt years, did not ſuffice for theſe extraordinary expences; and the exciſe and cuſtoms, the only conſtant revenue, amounted not to nine hundred thouſand pounds a-year, and fell much ſhort of the ordinary burdens of government. The addition of hearth-money in 1662, and of other two branches in 1669 and 1670, brought up the revenue to one million three hundred fifty-eight thouſand pounds, as we learn from lord Danby's account: But the ſame authority informs us, that the yearly expence of government was at that time one million three hundred eighty-ſeven thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy pounds[a]; without mentioning contingencies, which are always conſiderable, even under the

[z] Lord Clarendon's ſpeech to the parliament, Oct. 9, 1665.

[a] Ralph's Hiſtory, vol. i. p. 288. We learn from that lord's Memoirs, p. 12. that the receipts of the Exchequer, during ſix years, from 1673 to 1679, were about eight millions two hundred thouſand pounds, or one million three hundred ſixty-ſix thouſand pounds a-year. See likewiſe, p. 169.

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moſt prudent adminiſtration. Thoſe branches of revenue, granted in 1669 and 1670, expired in 1680, and were never renewed by parliament: They were computed to be above two hundred thouſand pounds a-year. It muſt be allowed, becauſe aſſerted by all cotemporary authors of both parties, and even confeſſed by himſelf, that king Charles was ſomewhat profuſe and negligent. But it is likewiſe certain, that a very rigid frugality was requiſite to ſupport the government under ſuch difficulties. It is a familiar rule in all buſineſs, that every man ſhould be payed in proportion to the truſt repoſed in him, and to the power which he enjoys; and the nation ſoon found reaſon, from Charles's dangerous connexions with France, to repent their departure from that prudential maxim. Indeed, could the parliaments in the reign of Charles I. have been induced to relinquiſh ſo far their old habits, as to grant that prince the ſame revenue which was voted to his ſucceſſor, or had thoſe in the reign of Charles II. conferred on him as large a revenue as was enjoyed by his brother, all the diſorders in both reigns might eaſily have been prevented, and probably all reaſonable conceſſions to liberty might peaceably have been obtained from both monarchs. But theſe aſſemblies, unacquainted with public buſineſs, and often actuated by faction and fanaticiſm, could never be made ſenſible, but too late and by fatal experience, of the inceſſant change of times and ſituations. The French ambaſſador informs his court, that Charles was very well ſatisfied with his ſhare of power, could the parliament have been induced to make him tolerably eaſy in his revenue [b].

If we eſtimate the ordinary revenue of Charles II. at one million two hundred thouſand pounds a-year during his whole reign, the whole computation will rather exceed than fall below the true value. The

[b] Dalrymple's Appendix, p. 142.

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convention parliament, after all the ſums which they had granted the king towards the payment of old debts, threw, the laſt day of their meeting, a debt upon him amounting to one million ſeven hundred forty-three thouſand two hundred ſixty-three pounds[c]. All the extraordinary ſums which were afterwards voted him by parliament, amounted to eleven millions four hundred forty-three thouſand four hundred and ſeven pounds; which, divided by twenty-four, the number of years which that king reigned, make four hundred ſeventy-ſix thouſand eight hundred and eight pounds a-year. During that time, he had two violent wars to ſuſtain with the Dutch; and in 1678, he made expenſive preparations for a war with France. In the firſt Dutch war, both France and Denmark were allies to the United Provinces, and the naval armaments in England were very great: So that it is impoſſible he could have ſecreted any part, at leaſt any conſiderable part, of the ſums which were then voted him by parliament.

To theſe ſums we muſt add about one million two hundred thouſand pounds, which had been detained from the bankers on ſhutting up the Exchequer in 1672. The king payed ſix per cent. for this money during the reſt of his reign[d]. It is remarkable, that notwithſtanding this violent breach of faith, the king, two years after, borrowed money at eight per cent.; the ſame rate of intereſt which he had payed before that event[e]. A proof that public credit, inſtead of being of ſo delicate a nature as we are apt to imagine, is, in reality, ſo hardy and robuſt, that it is very difficult to deſtroy it.

The revenue of James was raiſed by the parliament to about one million eight hundred and fifty thouſand pounds[f]; and his income, as duke of York, being added, made the whole amount to two mil-

[c] Journals, 29th of December 1660. [d] Danby's Memoirs, p. 7. [e] Id. p. 65. [f] Journ. 1ſt of March 1689.

lions

lions a-year; a ſum well proportioned to the public neceſſities, but enjoyed by him in too independent a manner. The national debt at the revolution amounted to one million fifty-four thouſand nine hundred twenty-five pounds[g]. CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THE militia fell much to decay during theſe two reigns, partly by the policy of the kings, who had entertained a diffidence of their ſubjects, partly by that ill-judged law which limited the king's power of muſtering and arraying them. In the beginning, however, of Charles's reign, the militia was ſtill deemed formidable. De Wit having propoſed to the French king an invaſion of England during the firſt Dutch war, that monarch replied, that ſuch an attempt would be entirely fruitleſs, and would tend only to unite the Engliſh. In a few days, ſaid he, after our landing, there will be fifty thouſand men at leaſt upon us[h].

CHARLES, in the beginning of his reign, had in pay near five thouſand men, of guards and garriſons. At the end of his reign he augmented this number to near eight thouſand. James, on Monmouth's rebellion, had on foot about fifteen thouſand men; and when the prince of Orange invaded him, there were no fewer than thirty thouſand regular troops in England.

THE Engliſh navy, during the greater part of Charles's reign, made a conſiderable figure, for number of ſhips, valour of the men, and conduct of the commanders. Even in 1678, the fleet conſiſted of eighty-three ſhips[i]; beſides thirty, which were at that time on the ſtocks. On the king's reſtoration he found only ſixty-three veſſels of all ſizes[k]. During the latter part of Charles's reign, the navy fell ſomewhat to decay, by reaſon of the narrowneſs of the king's revenue: But James, ſoon after his acceſſion,

[g] Journ. 20th of March 1689. [h] D'Eſtrades, 20th of October 1666. [i] Pepys's Memoirs, p. 4.
[k] Memoirs of Engliſh affairs, chiefly naval.

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reſtored it to its former power and glory; and before he left the throne, carried it much farther. The adminiſtration of the admiralty under Pepys, is ſtill regarded as a model for order and œconomy. The fleet at the revolution conſiſted of one hundred ſeventy-three veſſels of all ſizes; and required forty-two thouſand ſeamen to man it[l]. That king, when duke of York, had been the firſt inventor of ſea-ſignals. The military genius, during theſe two reigns, had not totally decayed among the young nobility. Dorſet, Mulgrave, Rocheſter, not to mention Oſſory, ſerved on board the fleet, and were preſent in the moſt furious engagements againſt the Dutch.

THE commerce and riches of England did never, during any period, increaſe ſo faſt as from the reſtoration to the revolution. The two Dutch wars, by diſturbing the trade of that republic, promoted the navigation of this iſland; and after Charles had made a ſeparate peace with the States, his ſubjects enjoyed, unmoleſted, the trade of Europe. The only diſturbance which they met with, was from a few French privateers who infeſted the channel; and Charles interpoſed not in behalf of his ſubjects with ſufficient ſpirit and vigour. The recovery or conqueſt of New York and the Jerſeys was a conſiderable acceſſion to the ſtrength and ſecurity of the Engliſh colonies; and, together with the ſettlement of Pennſylvania and Carolina, which was effected during that reign, extended the Engliſh empire in America. The perſecutions of the diſſenters, or, more properly ſpeaking, the reſtraints impoſed upon them, contributed to augment and people theſe colonies. Dr. Davenant affirms[m], that the ſhipping of England more than doubled during theſe twenty-eight years. Several new manufactures were eſtabliſhed; in iron, braſs, ſilk,

[l] Lives of the Admirals, vol. ii. p. 476.

[m] Diſcourſe on the public Revenues, part ii. p. 29. 33. 36.

hats,

hats, glaſs, paper, &c. One Brewer, leaving the Low Countries, when they were threatened with a French conqueſt, brought the art of dying woollen cloth into England, and by that improvement ſaved the nation great ſums of money. The increaſe of coinage during theſe two reigns was ten millions two hundred ſixty-one thouſand pounds. A board of trade was erected in 1670; and the earl of Sandwich was made preſident. Charles revived and ſupported the charter of the Eaſt-India company; a meaſure whoſe utility is by ſome thought doubtful: He granted a charter to the Hudſon's Bay company; a meaſure probably hurtful.

We learn from ſir Joſiah Child[n], that in 1688 there were on the Change more men worth 10,000 pounds than there were in 1650 worth a thouſand; that 500 pounds with a daughter was, in the latter period, deemed a larger portion than 2000 in the former; that gentlewomen, in thoſe earlier times, thought themſelves well clothed in a ſerge gown, which a chambermaid would, in 1688, be aſhamed to be ſeen in; and that, beſides the great increaſe of rich clothes, plate, jewels, and houſehold furniture, coaches were in that time augmented a hundred fold.

The duke of Buckingham introduced from Venice the manufacture of glaſs and cryſtal into England. Prince Rupert was alſo an encourager of uſeful arts and manufactures: He himſelf was the inventor of etching.

The firſt law for erecting turnpikes was paſſed in 1662: The places of the turnpikes were Wadeſmill, Caxton, and Stilton: But the general and great improvement of highways took not place till the reign of George II.

In 1663, was paſſed the firſt law for allowing the exportation of foreign coin and bullion.

[n] Brief Obſervations, &c.

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In 1667 was concluded the firſt American treaty between England and Spain: This treaty was made more general and complete in 1670. The two ſtates then renounced all right of trading with each other's colonies; and the title of England was acknowledged to all the territories in America, of which ſhe was then poſſeſſed.

The French king, about the beginning of Charles's reign, laid ſome impoſitions on Engliſh commodities: And the Engliſh, partly diſpleaſed with this innovation, partly moved by their animoſity againſt France, retaliated, by laying ſuch reſtraints on the commerce with that kingdom as amounted almoſt to a prohibition. They formed calculations, by which they perſuaded themſelves that they were loſers a million and a half, or near two millions a-year, by the French trade. But no good effects were found to reſult from theſe reſtraints; and in king James's reign they were taken off by parliament.

Lord Clarendon tells us, that, in 1665, when money, in conſequence of a treaty, was to be remitted to the biſhop of Munſter, it was found, that the whole trade of England could not ſupply above 1000 pounds a-month to Frankfort and Cologne, nor above 20,000 pounds a-month to Hamburgh: Theſe ſums appear ſurpriſingly ſmall *.

At the ſame time that the boroughs of England were deprived of their privileges, a like attempt was made on the colonies. King James recalled the charters, by which their liberties were ſecured; and he ſent over governors inveſted with abſolute power. The arbitrary principles of that monarch appear in every part of his adminiſtration.

* Life of Clarendon, p. 237.

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THE people, during theſe two reigns, were, in a great meaſure, cured of that wild fanaticiſm, by which they had formerly been ſo much agitated. Whatever new vices they might acquire, it may be queſtioned, whether, by this change, they were, in the main, much loſers in point of morals. By the example of Charles II. and the cavaliers, licentiouſneſs and debauchery became prevalent in the nation. The pleaſures of the table were much purſued. Love was treated more as an appetite than a paſſion. The one ſex began to abate of the national character of chaſtity, without being able to inſpire the other with ſentiment or delicacy.

THE abuſes in the former age, ariſing from overſtrained pretenſions to piety, had much propagated the ſpirit of irreligion; and many of the ingenious men of this period lie under the imputation of deiſm. Beſides wits and ſcholars by profeſſion, Shafteſbury, Halifax, Buckingham, Mulgrave, Sunderland, Eſſex, Rocheſter, Sidney, Temple, are ſuppoſed to have adopted theſe principles.

THE ſame factions, which formerly diſtracted the nation, were revived, and exerted themſelves in the moſt ungenerous and unmanly enterpriſes againſt each other. King Charles being in his whole deportment a model of eaſy and gentleman-like behaviour, improved the politeneſs of the nation; as much as faction, which of all things is moſt deſtructive to that virtue, could poſſibly permit. His courtiers were long diſtinguiſhable in England by their obliging and agreeable manners.

TILL the revolution, the liberty of the preſs was very imperfectly enjoyed in England, and during a very ſhort period. The ſtar-chamber, while that court ſubſiſted, put effectual reſtraints upon printing. On the ſuppreſſion of that tribunal in 1641, the long parliament, after their rupture with the king,

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king, assumed the same power with regard to the licensing of books; and this authority was continued during all the period of the republic and protectorship[o]. Two years after the restoration, an act was passed, reviving the republican ordinances. This act expired in 1679; but was revived in the first of king James. The liberty of the press did not even commence with the revolution. It was not till 1694, that the restraints were taken off; to the great displeasure of the king and his ministers, who, seeing no where, in any government, during present or past ages, any example of such unlimited freedom, doubted much of its salutary effects, and probably thought, that no books or writings would ever so much improve the general understanding of men, as to render it safe to entrust them with an indulgence so easily abused.

In 1677, the old law for burning heretics was repealed; a prudent measure, while the nation was in continual dread of the return of popery.

Amidst the thick cloud of bigotry and ignorance, which overspread the nation, during the commonwealth and protectorship, there were a few sedate philosophers, who, in the retirement of Oxford, cultivated their reason, and established conferences for the mutual communication of their discoveries in physics and geometry. Wilkins, a clergyman, who had married Cromwel's sister, and was afterwards bishop of Chester, promoted these philosophical conversations. Immediately after the restoration, these men procured a patent, and having enlarged their number, were denominated the *Royal Society*. But this patent was all they obtained from the king. Though Charles was a lover of the sciences, particularly chemistry and mechanics; he animated them by his example

[o] Scobell, i. 44. 134. ii. 88. 230.

alone,

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alone, not by his bounty. His craving courtiers and miſtreſſes, by whom he was perpetually ſurrounded, engroſſed all his expence, and left him neither money nor attention for literary merit. His contemporary, Lewis, who fell ſhort of the king's genius and knowledge in this particular, much exceeded him in liberality. Beſides penſions conferred on learned men throughout all Europe, his academies were directed by rules and ſupported by ſalaries: A generoſity which does great honour to his memory; and, in the eyes of all the ingenious part of mankind, will be eſteemed an atonement for many of the errors of his reign. We may be ſurpriſed, that this example ſhould not be more followed by princes; ſince it is certain that that bounty, ſo extenſive, ſo beneficial, and ſo much celebrated, coſt not this monarch ſo great a ſum as is often conferred on one uſeleſs overgrown favourite or courtier.

But though the French academy of ſciences was directed, encouraged, and ſupported by the ſovereign, there aroſe in England ſome men of ſuperior genius who were more than ſufficient to caſt the balance, and who drew on themſelves and on their native country the regard and attention of Europe. Beſides Wilkins, Wren, Wallis, eminent mathematicians, Hooke, an accurate obſerver by microſcopes, and Sydenham, the reſtorer of true phyſic; there flouriſhed during this period a Boyle and a Newton; men who trod with cautious, and therefore the more ſecure ſteps, the only road which leads to true philoſophy.

Boyle improved the pneumatic engine invented by Otto Guericke, and was thereby enabled to make ſeveral new and curious experiments on the air, as well as on other bodies: His chemiſtry is much admired by thoſe who are acquainted with that art: His hydroſtatics contain a greater mixture of reaſoning and invention with experiment

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than any other of his works; but his reaſoning is ſtill remote from that boldneſs and temerity which had led aſtray ſo many philoſophers. Boyle was a great partiſan of the mechanical philoſophy; a theory which, by diſcovering ſome of the ſecrets of nature, and allowing us to imagine the reſt, is ſo agreeable to the natural vanity and curioſity of men. He died in 1691, aged 65.

In Newton this iſland may boaſt of having produced the greateſt and rareſt genius that ever roſe for the ornament and inſtruction of the ſpecies. Cautious in admitting no principles but ſuch as were founded on experiment; but reſolute to adopt every ſuch principle, however new or unuſual: From modeſty, ignorant of his ſuperiority above the reſt of mankind; and thence, leſs careful to accommodate his reaſonings to common apprehenſions: More anxious to merit than acquire fame: He was, from theſe cauſes, long unknown to the world; but his reputation at laſt broke out with a luſtre, which ſcarcely any writer, during his own life-time, had ever before attained. While Newton ſeemed to draw off the veil from ſome of the myſteries of nature, he ſhewed at the ſame time the imperfections of the mechanical philoſophy; and thereby reſtored her ultimate ſecrets to that obſcurity in which they ever did and ever will remain. He died in 1727, aged 85.

This age was far from being ſo favourable to polite literature as to the ſciences. Charles, though fond of wit, though poſſeſſed himſelf of a conſiderable ſhare of it, though his taſte in converſation ſeems to have been ſound and juſt; ſerved rather to corrupt than improve the poetry and eloquence of his time. When the theatres were opened at the reſtoration, and freedom was again given to pleaſantry and ingenuity; men, after ſo long an abſtinence, fed on theſe delicacies with leſs taſte than avidity, and the coarſeſt and moſt irregular ſpecies of

of wit was received by the court as well as by the people. The productions repreſented at that time on the ſtage, were ſuch monſters of extravagance and folly; ſo utterly deſtitute of all reaſon or even common ſenſe; that they would be the diſgrace of Engliſh literature, had not the nation made atonement for its former admiration of them, by the total oblivion to which they are now condemned. The duke of Buckingham's Rehearſal, which expoſed theſe wild productions, ſeems to be a piece of ridicule carried to exceſs; yet in reality the copy ſcarcely equals ſome of the abſurdities which we meet with in the originals [a].

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THIS ſevere ſatire, together with the good ſenſe of the nation, corrected, after ſome time, the extravagancies of the faſhionable wit; but the productions of literature ſtill wanted much of that correctneſs and delicacy which we ſo much admire in the ancients, and in the French writers, their judicious imitators. It was indeed during this period chiefly, that that nation left the Engliſh behind them in the productions of poetry, eloquence, hiſtory, and other branches of polite letters; and acquired a ſuperiority, which the efforts of Engliſh writers, during the ſubſequent age, did more ſucceſsfully conteſt with them. The arts and ſciences were imported from Italy into this iſland as early as into France; and made at firſt more ſenſible advances. Spencer, Shakeſpeare, Bacon, Johnſon, were ſuperior to their cotemporaries, who flouriſhed in that kingdom. Milton, Waller, Denham, Cowley, Harvey, were at leaſt equal to their cotemporaries. The reign of Charles II. which ſome prepoſterouſly repreſent as our Auguſtan age, retarded the progreſs of polite literature in this iſland; and it was then found, that the immeaſurable licentiouſneſs, indulged or rather applauded at court,

[a] The duke of Buckingham died on the 16th of April 1688.

was

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was more deſtructive to the refined arts, than even the cant, nonſenſe, and enthuſiaſm of the preceding period.

Most of the celebrated writers of this age remain monuments of genius, perverted by indecency and bad taſte; and none more than Dryden, both by reaſon of the greatneſs of his talents, and the groſs abuſe which he made of them. His plays, excepting a few ſcenes, are utterly disfigured by vice or folly, or both. His tranſlations appear too much the offspring of haſte and hunger: Even his fables are ill-choſen tales, conveyed in an incorrect, though ſpirited verſification. Yet, amidſt this great number of looſe productions, the refuſe of our language, there are found ſome ſmall pieces, his Ode to St. Cecilia, the greater part of Abſalom and Achitophel, and a few more, which diſcover ſo great genius, ſuch richneſs of expreſſion, ſuch pomp and variety of numbers, that they leave us equally full of regret and indignation, on account of the inferiority or rather great abſurdity of his other writings. He died in 1701, aged 69.

The very name of Rocheſter is offenſive to modeſt ears; yet does his poetry diſcover ſuch energy of ſtyle and ſuch poignancy of ſatire, as give ground to imagine what ſo fine a genius, had he fallen in a more happy age, and had followed better models, was capable of producing. The ancient ſatiriſts often uſed great liberties in their expreſſions; but their freedom no more reſembles the licentiouſneſs of Rocheſter, than the nakedneſs of an Indian does that of a common proſtitute.

Wycherley was ambitious of the reputation of wit and libertiniſm; and he attained it: He was probably capable of reaching the fame of true comedy, and inſtructive ridicule. Otway had a genius finely turned to the pathetic; but he neither obſerves ſtrictly the rules of the drama, nor the rules, ſtill more eſſential,

tial, of propriety and decorum. By one ſingle piece, the duke of Buckingham did both great ſervice to his age, and honour to himſelf. The earls of Mulgrave, Dorſet, and Roſcommon, wrote in a good taſte; but their productions are either feeble or careleſs. The marquis of Halifax diſcovers a refined genius; and nothing but leiſure and an inferior ſtation ſeems wanting to have procured him eminence in literature.

Of all the conſiderable writers of this age, ſir William Temple is almoſt the only one that kept himſelf altogether unpolluted by that inundation of vice and licentiouſneſs which overwhelmed the nation. The ſtyle of this author, though extremely negligent, and even infected with foreign idioms, is agreeable and intereſting. That mixture of vanity which appears in his works, is rather a recommendation to them. By means of it, we enter into acquaintance with the character of the author, full of honour and humanity; and fancy that we are engaged, not in the peruſal of a book, but in converſation with a companion. He died in 1698, aged 70.

Though Hudibras was publiſhed, and probably compoſed, during the reign of Charles II. Butler may juſtly, as well as Milton, be thought to belong to the foregoing period. No compoſition abounds ſo much as Hudibras in ſtrokes of juſt and inimitable wit; yet are there many performances which give us great or greater entertainment on the whole peruſal. The alluſions in Butler are often dark and far-fetched; and though ſcarcely any author was ever able to expreſs his thoughts in ſo few words, he often employs too many thoughts on one ſubject, and thereby becomes prolix after an unuſual manner. It is ſurpriſing how much erudition Butler has introduced with ſo good a grace into a work of pleaſantry and humour: Hudibras is perhaps one of the moſt learned compoſitions that is to be found in

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any language. The advantage which the royal cauſe received from this poem, in expoſing the fanaticiſm and falſe pretences of the former parliamentary party, was prodigious. The king himſelf had ſo good a taſte as to be highly pleaſed with the merit of the work, and had even got a great part of it by heart: Yet was he either ſo careleſs in his temper, or ſo little endowed with the virtue of liberality, or, more properly ſpeaking, of gratitude, that he allowed the author, a man of virtue and probity, to live in obſcurity, and die in want [b]. Dryden is an inſtance of a negligence of the ſame kind. His Abſalom ſenſibly contributed to the victory which the tories obtained over the whigs, after the excluſion of parliaments: Yet could not this merit, aided by his great genius, procure him an eſtabliſhment which might exempt him from the neceſſity of writing for bread. Otway, though a profeſſed royaliſt, could not even procure bread by his writings; and he had the ſingular fate of dying literally of hunger. Theſe incidents throw a great ſtain on the memory of Charles, who had diſcernment, loved genius, was liberal of money, but attained not the praiſe of true generoſity.

[b] Butler died in 1680, aged 68.

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